

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

After vote, U.S. troops looking ahead
■ 1st ID troops making vacation plans
■ After losses, Seabees hungry for home

Pages 4-5



Duke, Krzyzewski show no ill effects from coach's collapse

Back page

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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2005

Terror suspects planned to attack U.S. convoys

Kuwait says militants considered using bomb-laden ice cream trucks Page 3

It's all relative as families serve together in Iraq Page 7



COURTESY OF THE U.S. ARMY/AP

From left, Sgt. Isaac Guillory, Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Edwards, Staff Sgt. William Edwards and Sgt. Joshun Guillory, all of Lawtell, La., laugh together as the relatives share a joke Friday at Camp Liberty, near Baghdad International Airport in Iraq. Paul and William Edwards are uncles to the Guillorys, making their assignment in Iraq a family affair. They are all members of the Louisiana National Guard's 256th Brigade, deployed to western Baghdad. Because National Guard units are made up of soldiers drawn from the same towns, the unit has 102 cousins, 46 sets of siblings, 10 uncles, one aunt, five fathers and sons, and five married couples.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Boston's Big Dig: After water forced its way through the tunnel wall in Boston's Big Dig on Jan. 10, 2004, freezing and snarling traffic for hours, officials at first blamed the leak on water leaking from incomplete overhead construction areas, The Boston Globe reported.

The leak in January, which leaked about five gallons of water per minute for about four days, was similar to a September gusher that spewed about 300 gallons of water a minute for less than a day.

Investigators found 29 areas where wall panels show signs of weakness and carry risk of leakage. The September leak won't be fixed completely until spring and will cost about \$750,000; repairs for other vulnerable wall spots will run into the millions.

Chicago porch collapses: Chicago city officials have accused two men contributing to a June 2003 porch collapse that left 13 people dead, saying the pair were jumping up and down on the three-story wooden structure during a party.

William Fenton-Hathaway and John Koranda, whose brother Robert was killed in the collapse, were accused of negligence in a lawsuit filed Friday in Cook County Circuit Court. A lawyer for the Koranda family accused the city of trying to avert blame for the tragedy. Relatives of several victims have sued the city.

N.Y. same-sex marriage: New York City will appeal a judge's ruling against the state ban on same-sex marriages, the mayor said Saturday.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg said he wanted the issue to be settled in the state's highest court or in the Legislature.

State Supreme Court Justice Doris Lindman ruled Friday that the city clerk may not deny a license solely because a couple are of the same sex.

The mayor said he wanted to avoid "a reputation of California, when many people for a month were misled into thinking they could get the union they so much wanted," referring to same-sex marriages performed last year in San Francisco that were later invalidated.

"I'm glad the judge ruled this way because it gets us the ability to get this to the appellate court," Bloomberg said.

The ruling, the first of its kind in New York, would clear the way for gay couples to wed if it survives on appeal. It applies only in the city but could extend statewide if upheld by the Court of Appeals in Albany.

Cosby accusations: The Canadian woman who has accused Bill Cosby of drug-giving and groping her has taped conversations with him that could either clear or implicate the actor, sources have told The Philadelphia Daily News.

Montgomery County District Attorney Bruce L. Castor Jr. is expected to announce sometime next week whether charges will be filed against Cosby "or anyone else."

On Jan. 13, the alleged victim told Canadian cops that Cosby dragged and sexually assaulted her at his Elkins Park, Montgomery County, Pa., home, according to a police report.

'Suge' Knight legal trouble: Rap mogul Marion "Suge" Knight was booked on suspicion of violating his parole after police found marijuana in his truck during a traffic stop, authorities said Sunday.

Knight was arrested Saturday evening in Barstow, Calif., and held by sheriff's officials pending his transfer this week to state prison, said sheriff's Sgt. Lorraine Riser.

Knight, 39, co-founder of the pioneering rap label Death Row Records, was released



Stability in Somalia: Thousands of excited flag-waving Somalis line the streets of their war-scarred capital, Mogadishu, on Sunday to welcome representatives of a new government formed in neighboring Kenya in a bid to end 14 years of anarchy in this Horn of Africa nation. Leaders of the city's Islamic courts, who have sought to establish their influence in the absence of a national authority, declined to attend, saying they could support only a government founded on Islamic law.

from prison in 2001 after serving time for assault and weapons violations. He recently served an additional 10-month prison sentence for violating his parole and striking a Hollywood nightclub valet.

Freight train crash: The three-man crew accused of failing to switch the railroad track before last month's freight train crash and deadly chlorine leak were fired by Norfolk Southern.

Union officials said the three men will appeal. They added each employee had at least 25 years of experience.

The Jan. 6 accident killed nine people, injured hundreds more and forced the evacuation of thousands of residents of Graniteville, S.C.

It was the deadliest train wreck involving hazardous material in nearly three decades.

World

Iran nuclear programs: A military attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would be a mistake, the European Union's foreign policy chief said Sunday.

There is widespread international suspicion that the United States might invade or attack Iran, which it accuses of using a civilian nuclear power program to hide an illegitimate weapons program. Iran denies this.

Javier Solana told Britain's ITV television network that a strike "would be something I would not like to see taking place."

"That would be a mistake. That will complicate enormously the situation," Solana said, according to excerpts released in advance. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, on a fence-mending European tour, said Friday that an attack was "simply not on the agenda at this point."

Afghan plane crash: NATO helicopters and hundreds of police officers struggled to reach the wreckage of an Afghan commercial airliner Sunday, three days after it rammed into a snow-covered mountain peak, apparently killing all 104 people on board.

Fog, freezing temperatures and up to eight feet of snow thwarted efforts to reach the crash site of the 737-200, found Saturday

about 20 miles east of Kabul.

Officials believe none of the 96 passengers and eight crew survived the crash, expected to be Afghanistan's deadliest commercial air disaster.

Moscow subway blast: Hundreds of people gathered on a Moscow subway station to honor the memory of 41 people killed by what authorities say was a suicide bomb blast in a crowded subway car a year ago, part of a series of attacks that have plagued Russia in recent years.

About 800 people, mostly survivors and relatives of victims of the Feb. 6, 2004, explosion, took part in the commemoration at the Avtozavodskaya station southeast of central Moscow, Ekho Moskvy radio reported.

The blast tore through a metro car during the morning rush hour, killing 42 people, including the attacker, and wounding more than 120.

Sudan crisis: The government will not send Sudanese citizens or officials suspected of committing war crimes in the western province of Darfur to any international court, Sudan's vice president said Saturday.

Last week, a report to the United Nations recommended 51 Sudanese — including high-ranking government officials, rebels and Arabs who served in the militia known as the Janjaweed — stand trial at the International Criminal Court on war crimes charges related to the two-year Darfur conflict.

Georgian prime minister's funeral: Georgians bid farewell Sunday to the late Prime Minister Zviad Gamsakhurdia and worries about the future of their struggling country and doubts over the explanation of his death.

Mourners by the thousands came to Tbilisi's recently opened Holy Trinity Cathedral and filed slowly past Zviad's coffin, which was covered with the Georgian national flag, as priests sang requiem music.

Zviad, 41, was found dead early Thursday in the apartment of a friend, who also died; both deaths officially have been attributed to carbon-monoxide poisoning due to faulty ventilation of a gas space heater.

Stories and photo from wire reports

Ice cream trucks were to be attack vehicles

Suspects recently detained in Kuwait reportedly have said U.S. convoys targeted

BY DIANA ELIAS

The Associated Press

KUWAIT CITY — An Interior Ministry official confirmed a report that militant suspects captured in recent police raids confessed to planning to use ice cream trucks packed with explosives to attack U.S. military convoys traveling to Iraq.

Some 40 terror suspects have been handed over to prosecutors since the beginning of Kuwait's unprecedented crackdown on Muslim militants last month, and more were being investigated by police, said the official, who spoke on customary condition of anonymity.

Members of a militant group told interrogators they wanted to park the ice cream and snack vans loaded with explosives next to highways and detonate them as U.S. military convoys traveling to and from Iraq passed by, the Al-Watan daily reported on Friday.

On Sunday, most of the vans had disappeared from major highways and in-

creased numbers of police cars were monitoring the roads. The snack vans, which also sell ice, are common on highways at this time of year when many Kuwaitis drive into the desert to camp.

Kuwaiti security forces fought with suspected militants in four deadly shootouts last month. Many Islamic militants in the country remain opposed to the presence of 18,000 U.S. troops based in the country and about 2,000 other troops who drive or guard convoys traveling between Kuwait and Iraq.

Suspects in custody include two women — the wife of the ringleader who allegedly helped him prepare explosives and the wife of one of five suspects who surrendered to police in Sulaybiyah on Saturday.

One woman captured Saturday, who was identified as a "non-Kuwaiti," was "hiding a machine gun under her abaya," according to the official, referring to the black head-to-toe traditional cloak that some women in the country wear.

The official said many of the suspects

were led by a militant preacher named Amer Khlaf al-Enezi, who was apprehended last month.

The interior minister, Sheikh Nawwaf Al Ahmed Al Sabah, told lawmakers in a closed meeting recently that al-Enezi's group of 24 people targeted Americans and the country's state security police.

The militants, which included Kuwaitis, Saudi Arabians and Jordanians, were arrested before they could carry out any attacks.

The five men arrested Saturday — two Saudis and three Jordanians — were not tied to al-Enezi's terror group, but they were wanted for investigations about "many security-related suspicions," the official told The Associated Press. He said they had few weapons in their possession when they were apprehended in Sulaybiyah.

In Amman, a spokeswoman for the Jordanian government, Asma Khader, said she could not confirm any arrest of Jordanian nationals in Kuwait. However, she

added that if the reports were correct the men "are considered outlaws and should be tried in accordance with Kuwait law."

The Sulaybiyah operation resulted in no casualties. Eight militants and four policemen have lost their lives in four shootouts around the country since January 10. The crackdown here for the first time, resulted in Kuwaiti casualties. The crackdown has prompted some Kuwaitis to give tips to authorities that has led to the arrest of suspects or the seizure of weapons caches.

The Al-Rai Al-Aam daily quoted a Kuwaiti Islamic Affairs official Sunday as saying copies of an unpublished book about jihad or holy war have been confiscated from mosques. The official did not say how many copies were taken.

Kuwait signed a security pact with the United States following the U.S.-led 1991 Persian Gulf War that liberated it from a seven-month Iraqi occupation. But militant fundamentalists who oppose the American military presence in their country have since 2003 killed one American Marine and a U.S. civilian contractor.

4 Egyptians are kidnapped in Baghdad, raising fears of new wave of abductions

BY JASON KEYSER

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Gunmen waylaid a minibus Sunday carrying foreign technicians to their jobs at a mobile telephone company in western Baghdad, seizing four Egyptians in the second kidnapping of foreigners in the Iraqi capital within a week.

The daylight ambush occurred only two days after gunmen grabbed an Italian woman journalist near Baghdad University, raising fears of a new wave of kidnappings after a decline in abductions since last year's capture of a rebel stronghold west of Baghdad.

Elsewhere, insurgents killed two Iraqi National Guard soldiers Sunday and wounded three others in an ambush south of Baghdad. Two rockets exploded near Baghdad International Airport and a third slammed into an Iraqi National Guard building in a western suburb.

There were no reports of casualties. The violence has continued despite the Jan. 30 election, when Iraqis chose a new National Assembly in the first nationwide balloting since the fall of Saddam Hussein in April 2003.

A final tally is expected by Thursday, but initial returns point to a landslide by Shiite Muslim candidates endorsed by their clerics. Shiites are believed to comprise about 60 percent of Iraq's 26 million people.

On the other hand, many Sunni Arabs, estimated at 20 percent of the population and the core of the insurgency, are believed to have stayed home, either out of fear of rebel reprisal or because of a boycott call by Sunni clerics.



A demonstrator from the Christian Democratic Assyrian Movement walks past security forces outside the Green Zone on Sunday in Baghdad. Hundreds of Iraqis shouted slogans and waved Iraqi flags outside Baghdad's heavily guarded Green Zone to protest alleged voting irregularities in Mosul that they say prevented tens of thousands from voting in last weekend's landmark elections. Electoral commission officials in Baghdad have acknowledged that many polling sites never opened Jan. 30 or opened late because of what they said were security concerns. A team of independent lawyers is investigating those and other complaints.

Meanwhile, the Polish-led security force in central Iraq will switch its focus over the coming months to training Iraq's new security services, the incoming commander said Sunday in Warsaw, Poland.

Gen. Waldemar Skrzypczak, who takes command of the 6,000-strong force on Monday, said the government that emerges from last month's Iraqi elections will need to ensure security ahead of a new vote scheduled in December, after a new constitution is agreed upon.

"That's why our mission will change from a stabilizing mission into a training one," Skrzypczak told Poland's PAP news agency. "New authorities must have the tools to fight terrorists."

The four Egyptians were seized early Sunday near the Mansour district of western Baghdad, Egyptian and Iraqi officials said.

They worked for Iraq, a subsidiary of the Egyptian firm Orascom Telecommunications, which operates the mobile phone network in Baghdad and central Iraq.

Six other Egyptians working for Iraqia were kidnapped in two separate incidents in September. No group claimed responsibility for the latest abduction.

On Friday, Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena was kidnapped by gunmen who blocked her way outside Baghdad University. Sgrena, 56, is a veteran reporter for the communist daily Il Manifesto.

Her colleagues appealed Sunday to her captors to free her, saying the journalist's anti-American stance and saying that holding her would damage the image of Iraq.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Saturday, at least 1,447 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

At least 1,105 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said.

The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is five higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated Friday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths.

Italy has reported 20 deaths; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,312 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count.

That includes at least 996 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A soldier was killed Friday by an explosive near Beji.

■ A Marine was killed Saturday in Baqir Province.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ No identifications reported.

1st ID troops making plans to get away

BY TERRY BOYD

Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WILSON, Iraq — If there is a common thread running through the lives of all combat soldiers, it's an unflinching faith that someday they'll go home.

For a year, 1st Infantry Division soldiers and officers have been in Iraq making money and making plans for their return to The World from a war zone free of the planet's most inhospitable places.

Days away from popping a currently verboten Heffie Weissen, 1st ID soldiers at FOB Wilson outside Tikrit don't have time to think about anything but business as they prepare to leave.

But if prodded, most will reveal their plan — a plan to leave it all behind; a plan to start their lives again. Others can't choose between all the inviting options. And one plans a pilgrimage to say, "Thank you."

Capt. Jeff Duplantis, a 25-year-old platoon leader with 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment scouts and newly promoted captain is planning to use block leave to go home to New Orleans, then make side trip to see Trish Brown's third grade class in the Raleigh, N.C., suburb of Apex.

Days away from leaving Iraq, soldiers start thinking about snow, beer, friends and family

Duplantis' brother Preston Duplantis, who lives in Apex, hooked up the scouts and the elementary school students.

For a year, Brown's third-graders have been writing letters, as well as sending care packages to individual soldiers including such items as

baby wipes and PlayStation games. Preston Duplantis, a veteran of the first Gulf War, "guided the students on what soldiers really need," Jeff Duplantis said.

In return, the kids got a lesson on the current conflict including photos and notes from the 30 soldiers. Duplantis said. When he was home in New Orleans on Rest and recuperation leave, Duplantis even phoned one kid, a boy named Preston, who is especially interested in Iraq.

"I called him, and talked with him about

fishing. And I answered his questions about Iraq."

Now, he wants to visit his brother, then spend the day with kids, thanking them and, most importantly, answering the question, "How's Lt. Jeff's platoon doing?"

Duplantis said.

Sgt. Ricardo Gomez, 26, from Caguas, Puerto Rico, is headed to Ohio via Chicago and Kentucky to get reacquainted with his 3-year-old daughter, Gabrielle, he said.

Gomez, assigned to 9th Combat Engineers Battalion, Headquarters Troop, hasn't seen Gabrielle since she was a baby because he and his wife divorced.

"She's going to become daddy's girl soon," Gomez said. "We're going to spend time ... getting her used to me again. Get-

ting to know her again."

After a scorching summer, Capt. Dan Baldi, a 26-year-old troop executive officer, is ready for some winter fun, he said. As soon as reintegration is over, Baldi and his snowboarding friends plan to head for the mountains for a two-week swing through Europe's greatest ski areas, starting in eastern Austria.

From there, the group will move west through the Austrian Alps into Italy's Dolomites, then north into Switzerland. The trip will end in Chamonix, France, at the convergence of France, Italy and Switzerland, Baldi said.

A native of Milford, Conn., Baldi started skiing as a child, then switching to snowboarding six years ago. He's done some trips, but this will be his first mega-European ski adventure.

Then there's Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Jackson, who can't decide between joining a group from his I-4 Cav scout platoon for an extended swing through Great Britain, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, or buying a 1000 cc Yamaha motorcycle. He's learning to ride the trip, Jackson said.

It would include a visit to Dublin, he said, sighing, "where Guinness (stout) flows through the streets."

E-mail Terry Boyd at: boydtd@mail.esrpress.osd.mil

Election affirmed sense of purpose for mission in Iraq

BY STEVE FAINARU

The Washington Post

KIRKUK, Iraq — As he walked through the mud surrounding his temporary barracks, 1st Sgt. Ken Agueda carried an M-4 assault rifle without its essential lethal components: bullets. Earlier in the day, Agueda had turned in his ammunition — cartridges, assorted grenades — in preparation for his journey home after nearly 13 months in Iraq.

"It's like walking around without your pants," said Agueda, a 17-year U.S. Army veteran from Bayamon, Puerto Rico.

With their departure just days away, Agueda and his unit, the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Infantry Division, were euphoric and reflective. In more than a dozen interviews over these past three weeks, soldiers with combat experience in all corners of Iraq offered up a mixed final assessment of a conflict that is burned into them forever. Its ultimate outcome, all agreed, remains highly uncertain and far away.

Soldiers ranging from privates to senior officers described last Sunday's national elections as vindication for over a year of hard service. The unexpectedly strong

turnout, they said, altered their perception about the willingness of Iraqis to embrace the American mission here and helped project a rare positive image of the U.S. military following such stains as the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal last year.

"This was the opposite of Abu Ghraib," Agueda said. "I think it's safe to say that this is the biggest thing that anyone of us has ever done. I mean, in our humble positions, we helped make history. We did something that could have a positive effect on the entire world."

Spc. Andrew Field, 31, of Tallahassee, Fla., described the elections as "the culminating event for our whole deployment. If it hadn't gone well, it would have been incredibly demoralizing to everyone. It gave meaning to everything we were doing."

But the soldiers were reluctant to say that the elections were a turning point in the war. "Leaving with the elections will definitely be a positive in our minds, but I don't know if I'm optimistic or pessimistic," said Capt. John Hussey, 26, of Uvalde, Texas. "I wouldn't be surprised if it flourishes, either."

"I wouldn't be surprised if the entire country descends into chaos. But I wouldn't be surprised if it flourishes, either."

Capt. John Hussey



The Washington Post

Tent City, an encampment in Kirkuk, Iraq, serves as a temporary home for the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Infantry Division before its members head home. Twenty soldiers clustered in each canvas tent to keep out of the rain that turned much of the area into a swamp.

Asked how long he thought U.S. troops would remain in Iraq, Hussey said: "Probably 10 or 15 years, if we want to do it right. I don't think there's going to be 135,000 Americans in Baghdad 10 years from now, but there are going to be Americans in Iraq for a long, long time."

The unit, based at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii, arrived in Iraq in December 2003. The battalion ranged from as far south as Najaf, where it twice battled the militia of Muqtada al-Sadr, a rebellious Shiite cleric, to the northern city of Mosul, where it helped provide security for the elections.

The 700-man battalion handed out at least 550 Combat Infantryman Badges for participation in

close combat. The unit suffered no combat fatalities. It has been nominated for a Presidential Unit Citation, which honors units that display "extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy."

The battalion experienced everything from snow to extreme heat; one day last summer, Sgt. 1st Class Greg Baker said his portable thermometer showed the temperature to be 130 degrees. During a 17-day stretch in Najaf in April, each soldier lived in an open desert and subsisted on one bottle of water and one MRE (Meal, Ready to Eat) per day. Spc. Kris Johnson, 22, of Chicago, joked that it was so cold and wet in Mosul in the days before the

elections that his fingers froze around his M-4 and that fellow soldiers had to pull the trigger for him.

The unit's final mission revealed much about the rigors of soldiering in Iraq. After the elections, the battalion had to return from Mosul to Forward Operating Base Warrior in Kirkuk. The convoy consisted of nearly 100 vehicles, from Humvees to trailers, and the journey was so complicated that commanders rehearsed it by chalking out a colored floor map that spanned an entire room. The vehicles left in stages and traveled with their headlights dark to avoid tipping off insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades.

SEE HOME ON PAGE 5

'We've had some hard times here'

Seabees' journey home tinged with pain of loss, pride of jobs well done

BY SCOTT SCHONAUER

Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain — For members of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Four, the last six months have been both rewarding and heart-breaking.

While the unit has built such things as polling stations in Iraq, a fitness track in Spain and a playground for needy children in Albania, the Seabees also bid farewell to three of their own on their deployment.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Kerrick Adams, Petty Officer 2nd Class Eric Knott and Construction Electrician Constructionman Mario Gaspar died in separate incidents in three countries.

While everyone in the battalion is proud of their work and elated about returning home to Port Huene, Calif., the unexpected deaths of their comrades has left some feeling "numb." Some are concerned that the reality of the losses might not sink in until they get back to their hometown.

"I would say it really hasn't hit people," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Solina Mungoy, a woman from Gallup, N.M. "Maybe later they'll realize it ... you really don't expect these things to happen."

Battalion Seabees spread out from the Bahamas to west of Baghdad in August as part of the regularly scheduled deployment. The main body of the unit went to Fallujah, Iraq, while smaller teams went to Rota, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Sigonella, Sicily; Souda Bay, Crete; and Kat, Albania.

In September, Knott, a steelworker with the battalion, was killed in a mortar attack while working in Fallujah.

The following month, Adams broke his leg while working on a school renovation project in Albania. The assistant crew leader went into cardiac arrest two days after surgery and died.

And on Jan. 6, the 23-year-old Gaspar died as a result of a brain aneurysm.

Petty Officer 1st Class Skip Jensen said what makes the deaths difficult is that there is likely nothing anybody could have done to prevent them. They can only curse fate.

"We've had some hard times here," said Jensen, who is helping to coordinate the return to California. "We've lost three Seabees, and I'm not accustomed to that. Past battalions and deployments, I've never lost anyone, so this is kind of tough."

Although the loss of their fellow shipmates emotionally blindsided some Seabees, the battalion continued with its work.

Seabees in Iraq faced the most dangerous and arduous conditions, working long days dodging indirect fire and traveling across roads lined with homemade



KATE ROBERTS/Stars and Stripes

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class James Powell, of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Four, weighs hundreds of boxes and crates of gear the Seabees will need when they reach their homeport in Port Huene, Calif.

bombs. Some of the members earned combat action ribbons and purple hearts during the deployment.

After the U.S.-led assault against insurgents in Fallujah in December, Seabees with the battalion worked with Iraqi contractors to clean up the war-torn town.

They pumped out more than 60 million gallons of water from the streets, cleared roads of debris and helped restore basic services.

Lt. Cmdr. Chris Kurgan, the operations officer, said he'll remember the "resolve and resilience" of the battalion Seabees in Iraq.

"We drove them extremely hard," he said via telephone from Fallujah. "... That they would line up to keep going it everyday is pretty amazing."

Senior third Petty Officer Chris Sparks, a builder with the battalion, said he is surprised at how people could give so much effort day after day.

"To be honest, I don't hear a lot of (complaining) out of anybody," Sparks said by telephone from Iraq. "There's not a whole lot of resentment for what we're asking them to do."

One of the final projects the Seabees worked on was a pair of polling stations in western Iraq near Jordan to help support the country's first election in decades.

Knowing that Iraqis seized the opportunity to vote at one of the polling stations built by Seabees "gives us some closure" to the battalion's deployment, Sparks said.

While half of the unit should be home by the end of the month, the group in Iraq will be the last to arrive back in California.

As many prepare for the journey home, they said they can't help but think of their fallen shipmates.

"We'll remember them constantly as we return," Kurgan said.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion One, based in Gulfport, Miss., will replace Battalion Four and arrive at Camp Mitchell in Rota later this month.

E-mail Scott Schonauer at: schonauer@mail.stripsides.osd.mil

Home: Soldiers leave behind a new Iraq

HOME, FROM PAGE 4

A Humvee carrying a reporter drifted off the road several times Tuesday as the 22-year-old driver, his night-vision goggles fogging, strained to find it in the rain and darkness. The trip took six hours and, toward the end, the convoy became lost in downtown Kirkuk, struggling to find its way back to the base.

"You can never really totally relax over here," said Capt. James Everett, 30, of Currituck, N.C., who was also in the vehicle.

"You have your downtime, but you're always on guard."

The following day, the relief among the soldiers was palpable. With nothing to do but pack and wait, they watched movies, read, slept, smoked or wandered aimlessly on the base. The infantrymen lived on bunk beds in an encampment called "Tent City," a cluster of tan, canvas tents packed with 20 soldiers each.

Rain had turned the area into a swamp. Hot showers were rare. No one seemed to care.

"I hear the hell are you?" A soldier yelled, smiling and waving to Capt. Chris Loftis, of Honolulu, who speaks fluent Arabic and served as the battalion's liaison to the Iraqi security forces.

"I'm great, sergeant," Loftis shouted back.

"I love you," yelled the soldier before disappearing into one of the camp's reeking portable bathrooms.

At the evening meeting for senior officers, the unit's commander, Lt. Col. Dave Miller, asked the battalion medic, Maj. Joel Meyer, for an update on his activities.

That afternoon, Meyer, normally a family practitioner at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii, had removed two locks from a black box that he had carried for the past year. He methodically took out the contents — vials of morphine, dozens of bottles of pharmaceutical-grade Demerol, the painkiller and Ativan, an anxiety-reducing medication — and spent the next two hours destroying them. Meyer dumped the pills into a port-a-john, where they disappeared.

He injected the morphine into the wall.

"Well, I disposed of tens of thousands of dollars worth of con-

trilled substances," Meyer reported. "I had three square meals, I'm planning on turning in early."

Each soldier seemed to carry a memory of his own brush with mortality. Johnson, a specialist from Chicago, said his car was last October during a U.S. offensive about 65 miles north of Baghdad. He was standing outside an Iraqi police station occupied by U.S. forces in Samarra when a rocket-propelled grenade came hurtling toward him.

"It was just a white streak, and it was screaming your name — Johnson! Johnson! Johnson! — all the way down the street," he said as his friends dissolved in laughter. The grenade hit a tank about 15 yards away and pitched him to the ground, he said, shaking his head.

harmful. Baker said his defining memory came during the same operation.

There was this family walking down the street, and you know, it's a war," he said.

"There's bodies tore in half and stuff all over the place and this barefoot kid comes walking up to me. He's holding his father's hand. I was just thinking, 'How will this kid possibly get over this?'"

He had brains and pieces of guts between his toes. I took out a piece of candy and I gave it to him, and he started smiling like absolutely nothing was wrong."

Baker paused.

"I just want to get home and see my girls," he said.

Capt. Chris Duncan, 28, a Johns Hopkins University graduate from Kingsland, Ark., said he staunchly supported the war. But when he heard a soldier had been killed, or saw one of his friends wounded, he occasionally found himself asking, "What was it for?"

On election day, Duncan said, he stood near a precinct and watched Iraqis stream to the polls. "First you had one, then two, then 50," he said. "Then the line was around the polling site. And this was in a neighborhood where people really had a reason to dislike us — former Baath Party members, former military regime guys."

Duncan, who has spent 20 months in Iraq over the past three years, said the image solidified his resolve.

"Now I know what it was for," he said.

No 'Iraqi version of America,' vice president says

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Vice President Dick Cheney on Sunday brushed off concern that Islam will be the guiding principle of Iraq's new government, saying the country has the right to shape its own democracy without becoming "an Iraqi version of America."

"They will do it their way," Cheney said. "They will do it in accordance with their culture and

their history and their beliefs and whatever role they decide they want to have for religion in their society. And that's as it should be."

The United Iraq Alliance — a Shiite-led group whose leaders have ties to neighbor Iran — has taken a big lead in results being tallied for the Jan. 30 election.

Cheney said he does not think that means Iraq will have a theocracy like that in neighboring Iran, where individual rights are re-

stricted.

The vice president noted that Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's most influential Shiite cleric, has said he does not believe clerics should play a direct role in the day-to-day operations of government.

"I think there are a great many people involved in the political process in Iraq who will seek some kind of balance," Cheney told "Fox News Sunday."

"But in the final analysis, the bottom line for everybody to remember here is, this is not going to be, you know, an Iraqi version of America," Cheney said.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld also said Sunday he doubts Iraq will model its government after Iran's. Such a move would be "a serious mistake," Rumsfeld said, while still acknowledging that Iraqis will establish their government on their terms.

Cheney

U.S. rejects charge of illegal detention

U.N. envoy claims American military may be torturing Afghan prisoners

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. military on Sunday rejected a U.N. human rights envoy's charge that American soldiers were illegally detaining prisoners in Afghanistan, and that some may have been tortured.

Cerif Bassiouni, an independent expert on human rights appointed by the United Nations, said Saturday that U.S.-led forces were arresting people "without any legal process... detaining them, mistreating them and possibly even torturing them."

Hundreds of suspected supporters of the former Taliban regime or al-Qaida have been held without charge or access to lawyers in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba — some of them for more than three years.

The United States says the detainees are treated "in the spirit" of the Geneva Convention, which affords protections for prisoners of war, even though it says they are not entitled to them.

"The people detained in these facilities

are illegal combatants," said Maj. Steve Wolman, a U.S. military spokesman.

"They are treated humanely, and people who run the facilities are well-trained."

Wolman declined to address the torture allegation, of which Bassiouni gave no details.

At least eight prisoners have died in American custody in Afghanistan since U.S. and allied Afghan forces ousted the Taliban in 2001 for harboring Osama bin Laden. Some former prisoners have alleged they were mistreated.

Speaking at a news conference during a visit to Afghanistan, Bassiouni contended that there was "no legal basis for coalition forces to hold people as prisoners."

"If they are held as prisoners of war then they have to observe the Geneva Convention. If they are held as common prisoners then they have to conform with Afghan law and constitution. They're not doing it," he said.

He said he was refused permission to visit the main U.S. holding facilities at Bagram, north of Kabul, and Kandahar in the south.

Oil-for-food investigation extended to Annan's son

BY DESMOND BUTLER

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Investigators probing alleged corruption at the United Nations oil-for-food program are scrutinizing thousands of pages of U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's documents, including e-mail and phone records, to determine whether he exerted influence in securing a contract for a Swiss company that employed his son.

Paul Volcker, the head of the independent investigation, confirmed the document search and told The Associated Press that new information had led investigators to delay publishing their findings about Annan's son Kojo, whose activities have embroiled the U.N. chief in the growing scandal.

The United Nations' oil-for-food program was its largest humanitarian aid operation and ran from 1996 to 2003.

It was designed to allow the former Iraqi government to sell limited amounts of oil in exchange for humanitarian goods as an exemption from sanctions in place since 1991.

Dr. Mohammed al-Jibouri, Iraq's trade minister, said on Saturday that more has yet to be revealed on specific individuals' roles in the scandal.

Al-Jibouri said the program initially had been a "huge success" in helping ordinary Iraqis contend with U.N. sanctions imposed on Saddam's regime after the 1991 Gulf War.



U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, left, walks with Benon Sevan, executive director of the United Nations Office of Iraq Program, after a meeting at U.N. headquarters on April 3, 2003. An investigation into corruption in the Iraq oil-for-food program has yielded a report accusing Sevan of conflicts of interest and has implicated Annan's son Kojo.

Problems began when Iraq began imposing a surcharge on contracts for goods bought under the program, he said. "A lot of companies refused to do this, so a lot of them actually withdrew from that program," he said.

As Volcker issued an interim investigative report Thursday, he said he had planned to include the findings about Kojo Annan's employment with Cotecna Inspection SA. The company had a U.N. contract to certify deals for humanitarian supplies imported by Iraq under the oil-for-food program.

Kojo Annan, 31, worked for Cotecna from 1996 to 1998, leaving at about the time the company received the U.N. contract. He has said that he worked for the company only in Africa and has denied any involvement in its oil-for-food dealings.

Volcker said investigators were following new leads that seemed to broaden the probe involving Kojo Annan beyond his Cotecna ties.

For example, an article published in the Times of London late last month detailed contact between Kojo Annan and Hani Yamani, the son of a former Saudi oil minister, in a failed bid for an oil-for-food deal. The paper quoted two unnamed "business associates" of Yamani, who claimed Kojo traveled to Morocco to help finalize the \$60 million oil sale, which later fell through.

The document trail has proved a key tool and following it helped investigators untangle deceptions by oil-for-food program director Benon Sevan. Volcker's Thursday report accused him of conflicts of interest for soliciting oil allocations from Saddam Hussein's regime.

ing companies paid surcharges," said Pieth, who is one of three commission members leading a probe into allegations of corruption in the oil-for-food program. Former U.S. Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker heads the investigation.

Swiss authorities already have fined one Geneva-based company for paying kickbacks under the program, which ran until 2003.

Several other companies in Switzerland and the neighboring principality of Liechtenstein have also been implicated in corruption relating to the program.

— The Associated Press

Paper denies access to classified info in Iraqi general's death

BY ROBERT WELLER

The Associated Press

DENVER — Newspaper lawyers asking that a military hearing on the alleged suffocation death of an Iraqi general be held in open court say the U.S. Army has refused to let them see evidence on why the session should be closed.

Four soldiers based at Fort Carson are charged with murder and dereliction of duty in the death of Maj. Gen. Abed Mowhoush during an interrogation at Qaim, Iraq, on Nov. 26, 2003.

A hearing officer closed the preliminary proceeding in their case on Dec. 3 after Army lawyers said classified information could be revealed.

Lawyers for The Denver Post appealed the closure to the Army Court of Criminal Appeals in Washington, which stopped the hearing until it rules in the case.

The Army gave the appeals court information to support its argument that the hearing should continue behind closed doors but refused to share that evidence with the newspaper's Washington lawyers, even though they have the necessary security clearances, Post attorney Steven Zansberg said.

"It is a fundamental tenet of due process and our adversarial system that a litigant must be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the evidence offered in support of a requested ruling," said a motion filed Friday on behalf of The Post.

The Army had no comment on The Post's motion because it is a matter before the court, said Martha Rudd, Army spokeswoman.

An Army brief filed with the court of appeals noted that an executive order issued by President Bush says information may be classified if it concerns intelligence activities, anti-terrorism defense or weapons of mass destruction.

A military law expert, Washing-

ton attorney David Sheldon, said the appeals court probably will order some of the hearing opened but will defer to the Army on which matters can be presented only in a closed hearing.

The four defendants, Chief Warrant Officer Jefferson L. Williams, Chief Warrant Officer Lewis Welschofer Jr., Sgt. 1st Class William J. Sommer and Spc. Jerry L. Loper, allegedly were questioning Mowhoush because he was suspected of funding insurgent attacks on U.S. forces.

The Army has said Mowhoush was placed inside a sleeping bag and tied in a so-called stress position, according to a filing in the case.

"This particular stress position has been used in the past and had rendered one person unconscious," military attorneys wrote.

"After that incident, ... Welschofer directed that only he and [another soldier] could use the sleeping bag technique."

It said Welschofer placed his hand over the major general's mouth and the Iraqi stopped breathing, although he recovered after 15 to 20 seconds, it said. Welschofer ordered him turned on his stomach and sat on the prisoner's back.

Mowhoush soon became non-responsive and later was pronounced dead.

Defense lawyers have refused to comment.

In a separate case, an Army judge at Fort Hood, Texas, on Saturday dropped the most severe abuse charge faced by a former guard at the Abu Ghraib prison, dismissing an indecent acts charge pending against Spc. Sabrina Harman.

She still faces charges of conspiracy, maltreating detainees and dereliction of duty for not reporting abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, and could face a maximum of 6½ years in prison if convicted. Her trial is set for March 7.

Going to Iraq a family affair in La. National Guard unit

BY CHRIS TOMLINSON
The Associated Press

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — When Staff Sgt. William Edwards feels hungry after a combat patrol, he can stop by his brother's trailer to eat if he has any gumbo on the hot plate. If he wants to check up on two of his nephews, they live across from each other, just a few yards away on this base near Baghdad's airport.

In a U.S. National Guard unit, brothers-in-arms might be actual brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins, wives, husbands, sons, daughters, or even a mother or father.

William Edwards is an infantryman in Louisiana's 256th Brigade. His brother, Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Edwards, is the senior enlisted man in the brigade's

1088th Engineer Battalion. Their older sister's two sons, Specialists Joshua and Isaac Guillory, also are combat engineers.

"Our father is to blame," William said.

The Edwards' father and uncles served in World War II and encouraged their children and grandchildren to join the Army. But only in the National Guard, where troops normally serve part-time at armories near their homes, would they all end up in the same unit. The whole family is from Lawtell, La.

Among the 3,900 soldiers in the 256th Brigade, there are 102 cousins, 46 sets of siblings, 10 uncles, one aunt, five fathers and sons, and five married couples. And that doesn't count in-laws or those "seriously dating."

Almost everyone agrees it's a

good thing, though everyone acknowledges that when a relative goes off the base, or "outside the wire," they worry a little more.

"I worry about him a lot," Paul Edwards said of his brother, who performs almost daily combat patrols. "I leave my room unlocked, and I usually cook food. Then all I have to do is look in there and see if something is missing, and then I'll know he's been there."

But having family so close helps those who do see combat.

"A lot of times I go outside the wire and sometimes we get hit a good little bit, and if I can't talk to anybody, I feel more likely to come to my brother over here, because we're brothers, and he understands me," William said. "You feel more safe, you have that safe zone when you have family around."



Captains Cristina and Henry Capello sit in their battalion headquarters at Camp Liberty. The married couple, who have a nearly two-year-old daughter, were mobilized together as part of the Louisiana National Guards 256th Brigade and sent to Iraq for at least a year. The Capellos are one of five married couples serving in the brigade.

The soldiers say the toughest toll is on family back home.

"My mom really dreaded us coming over here, and every time I call her she says we need to come home," Paul, 41, said of 69-year-old Willie Mae Edwards. "I said, 'Mom, you need to support us and take care of yourself back home. We joined the military to do this and we're going to do what we need to do.'"

Spc. Edmond Joseph, 22, said he enjoys being in the 1088th with his older sister, Spc. Jennell Joseph, 24, both from Donaldson, La.

Jennell said having her brother nearby helps with homesickness.

"I think if I'd been over here by myself, and I'm an emotional person, I'd think about home a lot, but by him being here, it helps me a lot to get through it," she said.

Lockheed Martin at forefront of jet funding fight

BY DAVE MONTGOMERY
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

WASHINGTON — With the Pentagon pressing for deep cuts in the F/A-22 Raptor, its defenders in Congress and the Air Force are responding with a huge counter-offensive that includes a flyover above the Super Bowl, a flood of letters to the White House and plans for an intense budget fight on Capitol Hill.

Congressional delegations from at least a dozen states — including Texas and Georgia — are already braced for battle after President Bush formally unveils his proposed federal budget Monday.

The spending plan would have a withering impact on Fort Worth, Texas-based Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. by halting the F/A-22 fighter jet and the C-130J transport within the next four years, according to media reports, analysts and Capitol Hill staffers.

"I would expect a lively debate in Congress," said Lockheed Martin Executive Vice President Larry Lawson, general manager of the F/A-22 program.

F/A-22 production, which employs more than 1,500 workers at Lockheed Martin's Fort Worth plant, would stop in 2008 with a total purchase of 179 aircraft, aborting plans for an additional 96 fighters through 2011, Bloomberg News Service reported.

Lockheed Martin's plant in Marietta, Ga., would sustain an even bigger blow as the Pentagon reportedly planning to cancel the C-130J by 2007. The Georgia plant is also the final assembly point for the F/A-22, and Lockheed Martin officials say the plant could close by the end of the decade if both aircraft programs are canceled.

The proposed cuts are the result of an abrupt shift in defense spending priorities as the Pentagon moves money out of big-ticket weapons programs to spend more on troops and combat hardware to support the ongoing war on terrorism. But defenders of the F/A-22 say the cuts will result in the loss of thousands of jobs, devastate the aerospace industry and undermine national security by taking a needed next-generation warplane out of the pipeline.

"That drastic cutback is not in our national interest," said Rep. Kay Granger, a Texas Republican, whose district includes Lockheed Martin Aeronautics headquarters. "You're talking about a drastic difference in what the Air Force says they need and what's been proposed by the administration."



The Air Force's new air superiority fighter, the F/A-22 Raptor, climbs during flight testing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. The plane the Air Force wants as a replacement for the F-15 continues to face a tough funding fight.

The F/A-22, an attack plane that started development in 1986, is one of the Air Force's top priorities along with the joint strike fighter, another Lockheed Martin project. Air Force officials insist that the service needs at least 381 to help the United States maintain long-term air superiority.

Although Air Force officials are effectively prohibited from going over the heads of the Pentagon brass and the White House, they have been anything but subtle in pitching the virtues of the Raptor. When the Defense Department asked the Air Force to provide a couple of jets to fly over Sunday's Super Bowl in Jacksonville, Fla., they eagerly fielded a pair of F-22s.

The twin-engine Raptors from Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., were expected to soar above the Jacksonville stadium 15 minutes before kickoff, along with two Navy F/A-18 Super Hornets.

Two Georgia Republicans, Sen. Saxby Chambliss and Rep. Phil Gingrey, organized a letter-writing campaign and initiated a conference call with White House senior strategist Karl Rove. Gingrey, whose district includes the Marietta plant, also buttonholed Rove at a black-tie inaugural ball to plead his case.

Boeing said to seek deal in ethics probe

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Aerospace giant Boeing Co. is moving to negotiate a comprehensive settlement to alleged actions it took to win U.S. defense contracts in recent years, a published report said Thursday.

The Wall Street Journal, citing unidentified sources, reported that the company has hired a high-powered outside legal team to prepare for negotiations as the Air Force draws up preliminary settlement amounts that range as high as \$700 million.

Boeing declined to comment.

"We really can't discuss it at all," said Dan Beck, a spokesman for the Chicago company. "We have a legal team and an external counsel that are assisting in navigating through the complexities of these issues."

The Air Force press office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Journal said Boeing has retained former Virginia attorney general and veteran white-collar defense lawyer Richard Cullen, a prominent Republican, and Jamie Gorelick, a former high-ranking Justice Department official under President Clinton. It said they have been authorized to reach an all-inclusive criminal and civil agreement in the next few months, although the company at this point has not admitted wrongdoing or agreed to pay any penalties.

Boeing has been barred by the Air Force since July 2003 from bidding on new government rocket business, a consequence of its having been found in possession of proprietary documents belonging to rival Lockheed Martin Corp.

Separately, investigators have been looking into Boeing contracts linked to former Air Force procurement official Darleen Druyun, who admitted giving the company special treatment before it hired her in January 2003. Druyun subsequently was fired by Boeing and is serving a nine-month prison sentence for conspiracy.

Michael Sears, the former Boeing chief financial officer who was implicated in the Druyun hiring, pleaded guilty in November to aiding and abetting illegal employment negotiations. He is to be sentenced Feb. 18 in federal court in Alexandria, Va.

Boeing shares fell 5 cents to \$52.18 in midday trading on the New York Stock Exchange. The shares traded as high as \$55.48 over the past 52 weeks.

"We really can't discuss it at all."

Dan Beck
a Boeing Co. spokesman

IN THE STATES

FBI struggles to expand domestic intelligence role

BY DANA PRIEST
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The FBI is dramatically expanding its intelligence role in the United States and is seeking control over the CIA's domestic activities, according to current and former intelligence and law enforcement officials.

At stake is control over the U.S.-based intelligence assets and information that has been invaluable in the past to understanding the intentions of foreign nations and groups.

FBI director Robert S. Mueller III is pushing to rewrite the rules under which the CIA and FBI have operated domestically for decades and to assist what he views as the FBI's proper authority over all domestic intelligence gathering as of a vast, but slow-growing, restructuring of the bureau to focus on counterterrorism.

But for decades, the CIA has been allowed under U.S. law to recruit foreign officials, business executives and students living in or visiting the United States to spy for the agency when they return home.

Under an executive order signed in 1981, the CIA is prohibited from spying on or conducting operations against U.S. citizens in the United States.

FBI and CIA counterterrorism and counterintelligence officials have been in heated debates the past few weeks, trying to hash out a new "memorandum of understanding" on domestic intelligence gathering. So far the two sides, which are officially portraying the discussions as an effort to better coordinate domestic intelligence, have made little progress, said intelligence and law enforcement officials. Mueller and Gross plan to meet on the matter soon, administration officials said.

"We're trying to put some coordinated structure to it so we don't trip over each other or expose one another's secrets," said a senior FBI official.

"We believe that neither agency should have complete responsibility for domestic collection," said a CIA official. "Instead, responsibility should be divided in a way that takes advantage of each agency's strengths."

In the past year, the CIA and FBI have sought to vastly expand the use of multinational corporations to recruit Americans willing to share information from their trips abroad. The CIA is also making a big push to embed its own spies in U.S. companies doing business overseas, but only with a company's knowledge and permission.

The agencies are seeking to deepen their outreach to U.S. research and academic institutes, and subcontractors for major government contracts.

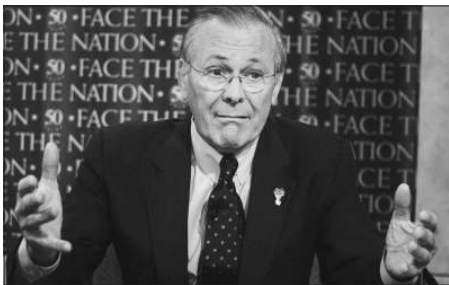
The FBI has also created intelligence squads for each of its 56 field offices around the country, a departure from the days when such squads were found only in larger offices like Los Angeles, New York and Washington. These squads find and cultivate Americans traveling overseas. The bureau has begun, as well, to beef up its agents in U.S. embassies abroad to collect intelligence from assets it established in the United States.

Mueller also wants to put the FBI in charge of disseminating all intelligence reports from sources — foreigners or U.S. citizens — living in the United States. Currently, the agency that collects such information is responsible for disseminating it. FBI officials say putting the bureau in charge would avoid duplication and confusion.

CIA and other intelligence officials note that the FBI is still frequently behind in disseminating its reports, and several months ago had a backlog of more than 100 terrorism reports it had not yet distributed. Many of those reports are not outdated.

Former and current CIA officers and other intelligence officials said the FBI, which is still struggling with an intelligence gathering department, is not yet ready to assume the lead role in domestic intelligence and is inexperienced in handling foreign assets whose real value is their work overseas, where the CIA has more experience.

Taking control of the foreign intelligence-gathering role in the United States "is a bit ambitious for an agency that is just now building its intelligence capacity," said an administration official familiar with the discussions. The CIA had collected foreign intelligence for over 50 years and has the skills, ability and resources to do the job.



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld appears Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation." He said he does not know when the United States will have trained enough Iraqis so they can adequately secure the country and replace U.S. troops.

Rumsfeld not sure of Iraqi troop readiness

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Sunday he does not know when the United States will have trained enough Iraqis so they can adequately secure the country and replace American troops now helping provide protection.

"It's interesting to me that some people think they know that because it's not knowable," Rumsfeld said.

The training of Iraqi security forces is one of the factors influencing the continued presence of American troops, which grew by 15,000 to 150,000 ahead of the Jan. 30 elections in Iraq.

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has told Congress that only about one-third of Iraq's 136,000 trained security forces are capable of engaging combat with insurgents across the country.

Rumsfeld said Sunday there are too many unknown factors to be able to say when Iraqis will be able to handle internal security.

Citing two of Iraq's neighbors, Iran and Syria, Rumsfeld said, "We don't know the extent to which they're going to be unhelpful or helpful" to enabling Iraq to overcome the insurgency.

Also uncertain, Rumsfeld said, is the extent to which "the political process is going to tip people away from supporting insurgency or being on the fence to supporting the government."

Further necessary to undermining the insurgency is cutting off its financial support, which comes from Saddam Hussein's loyalists and others, the secretary said.

"What you need to do is have the economic progress, the political progress which is going forward in such good style. And that will determine the level of the insurgency," Rumsfeld said.

"And the level of the insurgency will determine the speed at which Iraqi security forces will be capable of managing that level of insurgency."

He acknowledged there were lots of "ifs," but added, "That's life."

Police: Ala. mother confesses to starving 3 children found dead

The Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — The mother of three children found dead in a Huntsville apartment has confessed to starving her children, police said Saturday.

Nathasy Yvonne Ward, 33, was charged with capital murder Friday in connection with the deaths of her son and two daughters. She was being held without bail.

Officers found the bodies of Shanicka Y. Ward, 11, Latricia Ward, 9, and Christopher O. Ward, 8, on the floor in three bedrooms Friday, police spokesman Wendell Johnson said.

Officials said the children had been dead for at least several days. When the children were found, "they did appear malnourished," Johnson said.

Johnson said relatives told police they

had been trying to visit the family for weeks but Ward would not open the door. Officials said utilities in the apartment had been turned off since Jan. 12, and managers of the apartment complex had been preparing to evict the family.

Johnson said the children had not attended school since the holiday break. Workers with the Alabama Department of Human Resources had tried to visit the apartment in December but Ward refused to let them in, he said.

Ward was single and "took care of her kids," said Leatha McCutney, who managed the apartment complex until October.

After her car broke down last year, Ward "used to walk the kids to school every day," McCutney said. "It was just her and those kids," she said. "She was quiet. Paid her rent on time."

Cheney: No run in 2008

WASHINGTON — Dick Cheney says he won't be running for anything after finishing his term as vice president, except maybe to the river with his grandchildren.

"I've got my plans laid out," Cheney said Sunday. "I'm going to serve this president for the next four years and then I'm out of here."

Cheney said he made it clear when he became President Bush's running mate that he would never run for president and nothing could change his mind.

"Not only no, but hell no," Cheney told "Fox News Sunday." He quoted Civil War Gen. William Sherman, who answered similar queries in 1864 by saying, "If nominated, I will not run. If elected, I will not serve."

By 2008, I'll be 68 years old," Cheney said. "And I've still got a lot of rivers I'd like to fish and time I'd like to spend with my grandkids, and so this is my last tour."

Feds drop probe

WASHINGTON — Federal prosecutors have decided not to seek criminal charges against CIA officers who were part of an antiterror operation that was involved in the downing of a missionary plane in Peru and the deaths of two Americans in 2001.

Justice Department officials have until now not even acknowledged that they were investigating potential misconduct by the intelligence officers, including whether they lied to lawmakers who were looking into the incident and the interdiction program. But on Saturday, Justice Department spokesman Bryan Sierra said, "We've declined a criminal prosecution."

A Pennsylvania-based missionary group's Cessna float plane was shot down by a Peruvian jet in April 2001 after a CIA-operated surveillance plane misidentified it as a possible drug-smuggling flight. At the last moment, the contractors tried in vain to prevent the Peruvian pilots from opening fire.

Vernonica Bowers, 35, of Muskegon, Mich., and her 7-month-old daughter, Charley, were killed.

Alaska official resigns

JUNEAU, Alaska — The state attorney general announced his resignation Saturday after months of battling criticism for alleged ethics breaches while shaping an international trade deal.

Republican Gregg Renkes said he wanted to shield his family from the state's politics of personal destruction.

"I must leave this office and this privilege I have treasured and held dear. A family is priceless; a job can be won by others," Renkes said in a statement.

Renkes was to step down Monday after submitting a formal letter of resignation to Republican Gov. Frank Murkowski, who planned to appoint an acting attorney general this week. The governor accepted Renkes' verbal resignation.

From The Associated Press

No apology for Nazi comparison

Professor may be fired for comment on 9/11 victims

The Associated Press

DENVER — A professor who likened World Trade Center victims to a notorious Nazi refused to apologize but said his treatise was a "gut response" to the terrorist attacks.

"I don't believe I owe an apology," Ward Churchill said Friday on CNN's "Paula Zahn Now" program — his first public comments since the University of Colorado began a review that could lead to his dismissal.

Meanwhile, Wheaton College in Norton, Mass., and Eastern Washington University canceled plans for Churchill to speak on campus, citing public safety concerns. Stephen Jordan, president of Eastern Washington University, declined Friday to say whether specific threats had been made.

Churchill defended the essay in which he compared those killed on Sept. 11, 2001, attack to "little Eichmanns," a reference to Adolf Eichmann, who organized

Nazi plans to exterminate European Jews. He said the victims were akin to U.S. military operations' collateral damage — or innocent civilians mistakenly killed by soldiers.

"I don't know if the people of 9/11 specifically wanted to kill everybody that was killed," he told Zahn.

"It was just worth it to them in order to do whatever it was they decided it was necessary to do that bystanders be killed. And that essentially is the same mentality, the same rubric."

In an interview published Saturday in the Rocky Mountain News, Churchill added, "This was a gut response opinion speech written in about four hours. It's not completely reasoned and thought through."

Churchill said his speech had been misinterpreted. "I never called for the deaths of millions of Americans," he said.

Early editions of the Sunday Denver Post reported Churchill



University of Colorado professor Ward Churchill is shown at his home Friday in Boulder, Colo. University of Colorado administrators have taken the first steps toward a possible dismissal of Churchill, who likened World Trade Center victims to a notorious Nazi.

gave another magazine interview in which he was asked about the effectiveness of protests of U.S. policies and the Iraq war, and responded, "One of the things I've suggested is that it may be that more 9/11s are necessary."

The interview prompted Gov. Bill Owens to renew his call for Churchill's firing.

The furor over Churchill's essay erupted last month after he was invited to speak at Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y. The speech was later canceled.

Churchill, who recently resigned as chairman of the ethnic studies department but remains a tenured professor, said he would sue if he were dismissed.

Millions of nickels recovered

Knight Ridder Newspapers

MIAMI — Police searching for marijuana in the Miami area discovered an entirely different stash buried 4 feet underground Friday — millions of nickels that vanished last year en route to the Federal Reserve in New Orleans.

Talk about pay dirt.

"They're still in the Federal Reserve bags," said Miami-Dade County police spokesman Joey Giordano. "We think we got them all."

If so, that would be 3.6 million nickels. Forty-five thousand pounds of nickels. Nine hundred bags of nickels, many bags still neatly clasped with red clips. Exactly \$180,000 worth of nickels.

Officers looking for marijuana plants on a 5-acre farm first discovered an ice cooler filled with nickels then remembered that a tractor-trailer loaded with coins went missing just before Christmas, police said.

Officers began digging and hit the jackpot.

Cougar victim travels straight ahead, healing all her scars

BY JENIFER B. MCKIM

The Orange County Register

TRABUCO CANYON, Calif. — Anne Hjelte looks at the road ahead, determined, pushing herself as far as she can go. She holds onto the handlebars of her bike, pumps her legs and feels the wind.

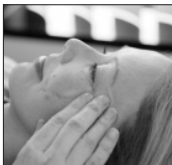
She doesn't fixate on the past. She doesn't complain. This is so even though a year ago last month Hjelte almost died while mountain biking, having been mauled by a cougar who gripped her head in his teeth.

She gains speed. It's the way she is.

This personal trainer and former Marine is getting back in shape and trying to be patient with the time it takes to repair her scarred face.

She's closer with her friend and riding partner, Debi Nicholls, who saved her life in a fierce tug-of-war with the lion.

And she's more enamored of her husband, who has shown that love is more important than looks.



Knight Ridder Tribune

Anne Hjelte gets facial therapy to reduce scar tissue and swelling at Mission Hospital in Mission Viejo, Calif., on Jan. 17.

"I never asked why it was me it happened to or why did I live it," said Hjelte, 31, mindful that mountain biker Mark Reynolds, 35, was killed by the lion that day. "I'm just thankful for being alive."

Hjelte and Nicholls, who recently received a Carnegie Medal of Honor for her heroism in the battle with the lion, are becoming reluctant celebrities as they are

flooded with requests for interviews and speeches. They have appeared on "Larry King Live" and "Inside Edition."

"In the beginning, I thought it would be a short thing and my life will get to be back to normal, but I don't know what normal is," said Hjelte, who attributes much of her ability to cope to her Christian faith. "I don't feel this need to go around and blab my story. If we are OK to do something good, then OK."

It was Thursday, Jan. 8, last year, when Nicholls and Hjelte went for a ride in Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park.

That day they were heading along Cactus Hill trail when they passed a man stopped by an abandoned bike. Hjelte sped ahead. There was a flash of movement. She was thrown from her bike by a 122-pound cougar, who clamped his teeth into the back of her neck.

Her first reaction was to reach around and try to punch him. Later she found her knuckles bruised and swollen. The lion released his grip and grabbed on

again, moving toward the front of her neck. She felt her ear pulled from her skull, her cheek tear.

Nicholls heard a scream and raced to find Hjelte. She threw her bike at the lion but he didn't budge. She grabbed Hjelte's left leg as they were dragged into the brush.

Within minutes, the three were at a standstill at the bottom of a ravine: The lion gripping Hjelte's head with his teeth, Nicholls holding her leg.

"I told her I would never let go," said Nicholls, a mother of four and downhill mountain bike racer.

Several riders arrived and pelted the lion with rocks. The cat disappeared. Hjelte awoke. Doctors at Mission Hospital worked to reattach her ear and cheek. She had nearly 50 puncture wounds and several severed facial nerves.

Hjelte's face was deeply scarred. She could not close her left eye — she taped it shut to sleep at night. The left side of her face was partially paralyzed. Her doctor said with time and surgeries, she would get close to the way

she looked. But it will never be perfect.

Hjelte has been asked to talk to teenagers about the positive self-image and church-goers about faith.

She hopes her message is positive. She's more compassionate to those with disabilities. When she first left the hospital, people stared and turned away. They thought she wouldn't notice, but she did.

Now she's learned to look others with disabilities directly in the eye and smile.

She's also found that people react more because of how she carries herself than how she looks. At first she wore a baseball cap and bowed her head. Now she holds her head high. She walks like a beautiful woman. She still is.

"People treat you better if you walk with the confidence," said Hjelte.

Having recovered from her shoulder injury last summer, Hjelte is back on her bike. She's on the road and hopes to soon head into the more challenging mountains.

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Actors' awards pave way for Oscar night

Guild honors stars for film and TV roles

BY SUSAN KING
Los Angeles Times

HOLLYWOOD — Jamie Foxx was named best lead male movie actor for his portrayal of the late R&B legend Ray Charles in "Ray," and Hilary Swank won best female lead actor for playing a scrappy boxer in "Million Dollar Baby" Saturday night at the 11th annual Screen Actors Guild Awards.

The cast prize for best movie ensemble went to the road-trip comedy "Sideways."

Foxx and Swank both won prizes three weeks ago at the Golden Globes, and are both nominated for Oscars. It remains to be seen whether the SAG awards will live up to its reputation as a prognosticator of the Academy Awards. Of the past 20 winners in the leading actor categories, 13 have gone on to win the Oscar. Last year, three SAG winners went on to receive the Academy Award: Charlize Theron for best female actor for "Monster," Tim Robbins for best supporting male actor for "Mystic River" and Renée Zellweger for best supporting female actor for "Cold Mountain."

Oscar nominee Cate Blanchett received the award for best female actor in a supporting role for her portrayal of Katherine Hepburn in "The Aviator." Morgan Freeman also received best male actor in a supporting role as grizzled boxing veteran in "Million Dollar Baby."

In the television categories, the late Jerry Orbach, who died in December of prostate cancer, won best male actor in a drama series for NBC's "Law and Order." Jennifer Garner won in the female category as the sexy spy in ABC's "Alias."

"CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" received the dramatic ensemble award for the entire cast.

Glenn Close was named best female actor in a TV movie or miniseries for her role of Eleanor of Aquitaine in Showtime's "The Lion in Winter." Geoffrey Rush was named best male TV actor for his portrayal of the late comic legend Peter Sellers in HBO's "The Life and Death of Peter Sellers."

Both Close and Rush also won Golden Globes last month for their performances. Teri Hatcher won best female actor in a comedy series for ABC's hit "Desperate Housewives" and Tony Shalhoub received his second SAG award in a row for USA's "Monk."

James Garner, a nominee for best supporting actor for the romantic drama "The Notebook" and received the guild's lifetime-achievement award.



Garner



The Screen Actors Guild awards were presented Saturday night. Winners for television and film included, clockwise from top: The cast of "Sideways," Paul Giamatti, Virginia Madsen, Sandra Oh and Thomas Hayden Church; Morgan Freeman, for "Million Dollar Baby"; and Teri Hatcher, for "Desperate Housewives."

AP photos

Floating hotels helped Fla. city land Super Bowl

BY MITCH STACY
The Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Who says a small city can't find the space to house more than 100,000 Super Bowl zealots? Jacksonville had only to look as far as the St. Johns River.

The city signed contracts with three cruise lines, which paid \$11.7 million to rent five ships to use as temporary hotels along the river, which runs through the heart of the city.

"This is the epitome of what we were hoping for — and that was a big ship in our downtown skyline," said Tom Petway, co-chairman of the Jacksonville Super Bowl Host Committee.

Petway was one of the first to board one of the ships, the Radisson Seven Seas Navigator. Exploring his 1,100-square-foot suite Wednesday, he declared: "This is really exceptional."

The Navigator and four other cruise ships moored along the St. Johns sealed the deal for the smallest city to ever land the Super Bowl.

When Petway and others went to the NFL in 1999 and asked to bid on a Super Bowl, they were told to forget it. Jacksonville didn't have enough quality hotel rooms to accommodate the crush.

That's when Jaguars owner Wayne Weaver came up with the idea to use cruise ships, which had been done at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and was part of the deal that helped Athens land the Games.

The group went back to the NFL in 2000 and convinced Commissioner Paul Tagliabue that by adding more than 3,600 rooms on cruise ships, Jacksonville could meet the minimum 17,500 rooms the NFL requires.

The Super Bowl committee worked with cruise



The Radisson Seven Seas Navigator cruise ship docks in Jacksonville, Fla., on Wednesday. Jacksonville rented five ships and parked them along the St. Johns River to house fans for Sunday's Super Bowl.

ship meeting planners Landry & Kling, which wrangled the five ships from three lines — Radisson Seven Seas, Carnival and Holland America — that have become part of the week's Super Bowl scenery.

Mayor John Peyton, who has been spending the week answering reporters who still question the city's fitness for hosting one of the world's biggest events, said incorporating the cruise ships into the game plan was a natural for what's being called "Super Bowl on the River."

"This is the place we come to gather in Jacksonville," he said of the St. Johns. "It's great to share this space with the rest of the world."

Thousands try out for Stewart's show

BY NICOLE G. RAY
Newsday

NEW YORK — Large Marj Alwain in Charge — as her friends call her — says she has what it takes.

Majorie Cozart, as she is formally known, believes that her ability to organize events and her skill at arranging flowers should win her a spot on a new "Apprentice" show featuring Martha Stewart.

"Every time I watch 'The Apprentice,' people say 'Majorie, you should try out,'" said Cozart, 33, who stood in line for hours Friday morning in downtown Manhattan to do just that.

"I am resourceful and creative," said Cozart, who lives in Harlem and works as an executive assistant. "Whatever people give me, I take it and run with it."

Cozart was among the thousands who waited in line for an opportunity to be cast in "The Apprentice: Martha Stewart," an NBC spin-off patterned after Donald Trump's successful reality show. The new show will retain much of the flavor of the original series. The style, however, will be tailored to suit the personality of the decorating diva.

Applicants were decked in business suits and dress shoes and car-

ried manila envelopes. Professionalism seemed to be key, as most said it is about creating an impression. After waiting in line, they were ushered for group interviews.

"It's more artistic than Donald Trump's show," said a hopeful Kristin Reign, 28, an actress who moved to Manhattan from Orlando, Fla., last summer.

And while Trump is known on his show for the "You're fired!" phrase, Reign said Stewart's should be "You're color-blind," for those who fail to prove their artistic flair.

Hopeful protégés also said that Stewart's prison record would not affect the show. Stewart, who was sentenced to 5 months in prison and 5 months' house arrest for lying about a stock sale, should be released from an Alderson, W.Va., prison next month.

"She's a phenomenal woman," echoed Trump. "She's a friend of mine."

Casting for both the Stewart and original versions of "The Apprentice" began Friday in New York, Detroit and Houston. It will continue in 27 other U.S. cities through the end of this month. The show's producers would not say when contestants will be chosen.



Stewart

Tsunami-nit Indonesia ready for U.S. to leave

BY CHRIS BRUMMITT

The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — The massive recovery from Asia's tsunami entered its seventh week Sunday, with the U.S. military winding down its deliveries of aid by helicopter but workers in Indonesia still finding several hundred corpses per day.

Indonesia's disaster agency said that laborers clearing debris in Aceh province on the northern tip of Sumatra island found 1,634 bodies in the previous two days alone, while the Turkish prime minister toured the devastated region to see how his country could help.

Another tsunami-ravaged country, Thailand, held national elections expected to return the incumbent prime minister to office with an even greater mandate, partly on the strength of his facile handling of that country's response to the Dec. 26 disaster.

A U.S. Navy commander said over the weekend that emergency relief by his country's troops probably would wrap up this month, closing the biggest U.S. military operation in Southeast Asia since the Vietnam War.

Estimates of the death toll from 11 tsunami-hit nations ranged Sunday from about 152,000 to

178,000 — more than 113,000 in Indonesia alone. The number of missing ranged from 26,000 to 142,000. Most are presumed dead, but officials say it's too early to add them to the toll.

The aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln has left the waters off Sumatra after spending a month leading a massive helicopter relief mission into devastated villages along its western coast.

Rear Adm. William Douglas Crowder, the commander of the Lincoln's battle group, said 4,000 to 5,000 U.S. military personnel remain deployed, mostly offshore, in the multinational relief effort.

But he said he expected those forces to end their missions "in a couple of weeks." He declined to give an exact date.

"I don't think it will be a long time," he said as the Lincoln was docked at Singapore's Changi Naval Base.

Other countries, including Australia, France and Japan, also sent military forces to help in the aid effort. The U.S. contingent was the largest, at one state numbering up to 15,000 people.

Indonesia welcomed the foreign help but has said it will be ready to take control of the relief operation by late March, when the foreign troops should leave.

Waves took what war left behind

BY ALEXANDRA ZAVIS

The Associated Press

HAFUN, Somalia — More than a decade ago, Norta Ibrahim Mudey fled the violent anomaly of Mogadishu for the sanctuary of this remote fishing village on the far northeastern coast of Somalia. But her newfound peace was shattered the day giant waves raced across the ocean from Asia.

Somalis who for years have been battered by war and drought thought they knew devastation. Then came the Dec. 26 tsunami.

"I have seen death and destruction in the civil war, but nothing like this," said Mudey, a diminutive woman wrapped in a veil, rustling in front of a shack patched together with squat metal sheeting and a bright pink cloth.

Mudey's husband and 6-month-old child were swept to sea. Only her husband's body was found.

Humanitarian workers estimate that at least 100 families who'd moved here to escape clan fighting in Somalia's interior lost everything when the tsunami struck. Other families devastated by the natural disaster had moved here to escape drought or were simply in search of a better life.

The waves lashed 400 miles of coastline. Estimates of the number killed range from 130,000 to, with thousands of others affected.

The Horn of Africa country has been without an effective central government since opposition leaders united to oust dictator Mohamed Siyad Barre in 1991. The leaders then turned their guns on one another, carving the nation of 7 million into battling fiefdoms ruled by clan-based factions.

The conflict has left more than 500,000 people dead, about 400,000 driven from home and more than 350,000 refugees, according to aid agencies.



Norta Ibrahim Mudey stands Tuesday outside her temporary shelter in Hafun in north eastern Somalia. Mudey fled the fighting of Mogadishu in the 1990s only to lose everything when the tsunami struck her village of Hafun in December.

The family had a two-room house at the water's edge. They bought a television and satellite dish. And they supported a host of relatives and friends. Then the waves came.

"The sea took everything," Mudey said — house, savings, belongings, husband and baby.

Two days later, her husband's body washed ashore, but her baby was never found. Their three other children were out with an aunt when the disaster happened and escaped unharmed.

Committee to study release of prisoners

BY RAMIT PLUSHNICK-MASTI

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israel on Sunday signaled it will consider freeing some Palestinian prisoners involved in attacks on Israelis, defusing a crisis with the Palestinian Authority ahead of a historic Mideast summit.

Last week, Israel's Cabinet approved the release of 900 prisoners, none involved in violence. Palestinian officials complained that the planned gesture, ahead of Tuesday's summit in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, did not go far enough, and the dispute overshadowed summit preparations.

Late Saturday, top aides of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas agreed to form a committee to study additional releases, including of prisoners involved in attacks. Negotiators also finalized an arrangement of conditional amnesty for Palestinian fugitives, they said.

In the Gaza Strip, an Egyptian delegation led by the deputy of intelligence chief Omar Suleiman was to meet with Abbas, leaders of militant groups and security commanders to shore up an emerging cease-fire deal and review the deployment of Palestinian police in the volatile territory.

The prisoner issue is one of the most emotionally charged on the Israeli-Palestinian agenda, and a large-scale release would boost Abbas who is trying to negotiate an end to the armed Palestinian uprising. Israel holds more than 7,000 Palestinian prisoners, many of them arrested in the current round of fighting.

Palestinian officials have complained that Israel's decision to release 900 prisoners is insufficient. They are pushing for the immediate release of some 400 prisoners convicted before 1993, when Israel and the PLO signed a mutual recognition agreement.

Hisham Abdel Razek, Palestinian Cabinet minist-



Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is to meet Tuesday with Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, their first meeting since Abbas was elected Jan. 9.

ter in charge of prisoner issues, said that if Israel does not ease its criteria, it could hurt Abbas. "It will not allow him to succeed in the Palestinian street," Abdel Razek told Israeli Army Radio. Israel's deputy defense minister, Zeev Boim, said additional prisoner releases are inevitable, but that Israel wouldn't rush into it. "The issue of releasing prisoners is very sensitive," he said (the Palestinian press), so we will have to release prisoners," Boim told Army Radio. "The committee will discuss how it can be done."

A senior Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said additional releases would be considered by the joint committee. In return, the Palestinian agreed not to make the prisoners "an issue at the summit," the Israeli official said.

Israeli security officials said Qassam Barghouti, son of imprisoned uprising leader Marwan Barghout, would be freed. The younger Barghouti, a student in Egypt, was arrested on entering the West Bank in 2003. The Israelis said he was suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. Israel is refusing to free the elder Barghouti, who is serving five life terms after convictions on involvement in fatal attacks against Israelis.

Mexican voters head to the polls amid tension

BY JOHN RICE

The Associated Press

ACAPULCO, Mexico — Guerilla-style attacks in Acapulco and a police strike across the country in Cancun have added to worries over Sunday's votes for governor in three Mexican states where parties don't usually refer to politics.

Voters in plastic sandals — and a few in bathing suits — filed through open-air polling places around Acapulco's posh Costera boulevard Sunday as well as in the hillside slums where many tourism workers live.

The voting — and likely post-election feuding — could affect the 2006 national presidential campaign.

The Democratic Revolution Party, which finished third in the

last two presidential races, is counting on a strong showing to prove it's a strong national challenger.

The Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, hopes the three states will pull it still further out of the crisis caused by its loss of the 2000 presidential election, ending 71 years in power.

The edge of tension grew on Saturday when unidentified gunmen with automatic weapons killed three policemen and a 15-year-old bystander in the Acapulco area on Saturday during three separate attacks — one of them just a few blocks from the city's famed water front.

In Quintana Roo state on Mexico's other coast, election security was complicated by a strike by some 200 police officers in Cancun, which has about half the state's population.

Seven African countries sign rain forest treaty

BRAZZAVILLE, Republic of Congo — Leaders of seven Central African countries signed a landmark treaty on Saturday to work together to help save the world's second-largest rain forest.

The forests make up the heart of Africa, encompassing 500 million acres stretching through 10 countries. They are also home to more than half Africa's animal species, including the world's entire population of lowland gorillas. Nearly 20 million people depend on the forests for food and shelter.

Environmentalists say 3.7 million acres of land in the Congo Basin are lost each year to illegal logging, poaching, ivory trafficking and a rampant bushmeat trade.

In attendance at the event were leaders from the Republic of Congo, Gabon, Sao Tome, Equatorial Guinea, Congo, Chad and Central African Republic — which make up the bulk of the Congo Basin.

From The Associated Press

Rain doesn't hurt Brazil's famous carnival

BY MICHAEL ASTOR

The Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil — Even the pouring rain couldn't put a damper on this country's famed carnival as tens of thousands of revelers took to the streets Saturday, dancing to the sound of samba drums on the second day of the annual celebration.

Samba rhythms rose above the sound of intermittent rain showers, and many people wielded umbrellas as they fell in behind the "bloos" — as the informal street carnival groups are known.

The Banda de Ipanema attracted more than 10,000 people and snarled traffic in the city's famous beach district.

The band, which is a favorite of Rio's gay community, pounded out samba songs with irreverent lyrics while transvestites struggled to stay upright in stiletto heels.

"The energy is incredible, everyone comes together, rich and poor, that's what is so nice," said Chris O'Connell, a 23-year-old musician from New York who was visiting Rio for carnival.

The party got started early.

Some 40,000 revelers had filled the city's main avenue by midmorning, many dressed in white with black spots in tribute to a traditional brass band known as the Black Ball Band.

The crowd turned out despite the threat of rain to celebrate the band — Cordão de Bola Preta in Rio's favelas — which has played at the world's most famous carnival since 1918. One of the last of its kind, the



AP photos

Left: The Rei Momo, or Carnival King, Marcelo Reis greets people on the streets of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Friday. The event officially opens Carnival. Right: People dance samba during a parade on "Bola Preta" block in Rio de Janeiro on Saturday.

band prides itself on providing an accessible alternative to more formal carnival events.

The samba parade in the specially designed sambadrome stadium is the centerpiece of Rio's carnival celebrations, which began Friday and will run until the wee hours of Ash Wednesday. The high point comes Sunday and Monday nights when the city's 14 premiere samba groups mount parades that cost more than \$1 million to produce.

The groups parade with thousands of elaborately costumed dancers, hundreds of drummers and a slew of elaborate floats. The spectacle is televised live across the nation.

But for many, carnival lost some of its spontaneity when the city moved the celebration into the specially designed sambadrome stadium in 1984. In recent years, such groups as Cordão de Bola Preta have been gaining popularity as carnival returns to the streets.

Some 770,000 tourists are expected in the city for the pre-Lenten bash, with about 20 percent coming from abroad, according to the Rio de Janeiro tourist board.

To ensure safety, state authorities have deployed 30,000 police officers around the city — including 10,000 around the sambadrome stadium. Police also were occupying the shantytowns surrounding the stadium that are usually controlled by heavily armed drug gangs.

Bob Marley bash brings thousands to Ethiopia

BY DAGNACHEW TEKLU

The Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — Thousands of Ethiopians and Rastafarians were jamming on a hot Sunday in the capital's main square as Ethiopia threw a birthday bash for the late reggae star Bob Marley, in what is billed as the country's largest concert.

It is part of monthlong celebrations of the 60th anniversary of Marley's birth. He died in 1981. This is the first time the event was held outside the singer's native Jamaica and is organized by the Bob Marley Foundation, the U.N. children's agency, the African Union and others.

A priest from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church blessed the event and then first on stage was Burundi's Royal Drummers.

Many of those in Meskel Square for Sunday's concert wore T-shirts emblazoned with portraits of Bob Marley. Others wore headbands, jewelry and T-shirts decorated with the Ethiopian national flag and Rastafarian colors of green, yellow and red.

Organizers said they expected as many as 300,000 people to attend the free event, which is dubbed "Africa Unite" after one of Marley's many famous songs. "I think it is incredible that so



His Holiness Pope Abune Paulos, Head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, left, is invited to look at a painting exhibition by Rita Marley, right, wife of legendary reggae singer Bob Marley and former backing singer of the Wailers, in Addis Ababa City Hall, Ethiopia, on Tuesday.

many years after brother Bob's death, he still inspires such an amazing show," said Yohannes, a Rastafarian, who goes by a single name.

Marley's five sons, widow and former backup singers were expected to perform along with Benin music star Angelique Kidjo, Senegal's Youssou N'Dour and Baaba Maal. Well-known Ethiopian artists also were set to perform.

Ethiopia's evangelical churches on Saturday objected to the celebrations, saying that Rastafarians are wrong to consider Ethiopia's last emperor a living god and they would expose Ethiopian youth to marijuana.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the country's main church, has, however, supported the celebrations.

Some Rastafarians smoke marijuana as a sacrament, but others object to its use. Most Rastafarians preach a oneness with nature and grow their hair into long matted strands called dreadlocks.

Meskel Square, which has been undergoing a facelift over the past month with new paving and streetlights, was fluttering with Ethiopian, Jamaican and other countries' flags.

"This is a big day for Bob," said Bisrat Teddesse, an Ethiopian businessman out for a morning walk with his wife. "I like the Jamaicans," he said, using a common Ethiopian term for the country's small Rastafarian community. "And I love Bob. He is Ethiopia's elder son."

The concert was broadcast live on Ethiopian television.

Chinese hit railway for Lunar New Year

BY ALEXA OLESEN

The Associated Press

BEIJING — They swam the rails every year — millions of travelers who brave crowds, germs, pickpockets and standing for hours on lurching trains to make it home for China's biggest family holiday.

The government says Chinese will make 1.97 billion trips during the 40-day travel period around Lunar New Year, which begins Wednesday. The railways are carrying 4 million people a day.

But to get home, most seem ready to put up with the hardships.

"I am going to see my wife, my kids, my parents," said Chen Ganshun, a 35-year-old construction worker. Chen was waiting at Beijing's West Train Station for a train to Sichuan province, 600 miles to the southwest. Like many of China's millions of migrant workers, he hasn't been home since this time last year.

Around Chen in the hulking, hangar-like station, other travelers bustled past, hurrying from ticket counters to souvenir shops to train platforms, their breath white in the cold air.

Massive speakers blared out tinny warnings: "Travelers, when standing in line, don't push. And be mindful of your belongings, especially your mobile phones and wallets."

"You do have to be careful," said Chen, bundled up against the cold in a flannel shirt, four sweaters and a sport coat. His trip will be long, but Chen is lucky. He's with friends and he has a seat.

Thousands of others were forced to buy standing tickets.

Jiang Feng, 36, a clothing shop owner from the southern coastal city of Wenzhou, said he did it for a 30-hour journey after he couldn't get a plane ticket or even a seat on a train.

"I am getting prepared by sitting here," Jiang said, smoking a cigarette on a frigid concrete bench.

Others are preparing to protect their health.

This year's travel season comes after a meningitis outbreak that killed at least 17 people and sickened 258. The government declared the outbreak under control last week but ordered extra sanitation for trains, buses and other vehicles.

China's crowded trains — littered with pumpkin seed husks, cigarette butts, used tissues and where many people spit in aisles — are an ideal breeding ground for contagious diseases.

Announcements at the train station also warned travelers against falling prey to scammers or China's thriving trade in fake tickets.

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OPINION

Sex, politics and Sen. Clinton's ambitions

BY MARGARET CARLSON

Los Angeles Times

I was trying to think of a person other than Hillary Rodham Clinton whose fainting would be breaking news on three continents. George and Laura, yes. Sen. John McCain, maybe. Jennifer Aniston? Possibly, if her swoon followed the sighting of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie en flagrante.

My point is that Hillary is in a class by herself, and not just because she powered through two more speeches that day. Her historic move — straight from the East Wing to the U.S. Senate — brought her one-name fame and made her the brightest star in the political firmament. If she wants the nomination, she is likely to get it, thanks to superior organization, fund raising and a base as solid as President Bush's. If she does, gleeful Republicans and some frantic Democrats foresee a general-election loss reaching McGovernesque proportions.

What the glee and wonder don't take into account is how shrewdly Hillary is repositioning herself, in sharp contrast to the rest of her party. Sure, she carries a lot of baggage and attracts visceral resentment not limited to insecure males. But remember that Richard Nixon used the exposure of a presidential campaign to offload some of the heaviest baggage in American political history.

Religion is now so central to our politics that every candidate prays like Voltaire on his deathbed just to cover his bets. This comes easily to Hillary, who's naturally self-righteous and a sincere, lifelong Methodist. For a while, she's been a regular at the Senate's weekly prayer breakfasts, clutching her own well-worn Bible, sometimes even holding hands with Sen. Lindsay Gra-

ham, R-S.C., chief among her husband's tormentors.

To get right with the military, which never forgave her husband for his "don't ask, don't tell" doctrine, she chose to be on the Armed Services Committee. On weekends, instead of hanging around the house in Chappaqua, she visits bases.

But nothing shows off her third-way skills more than her recent proclamation on abortion, which she called "a sad, tragic choice" that shouldn't "ever have to be exercised, or only in very rare circumstances."

The speech surprised many who have long known her as a die-hard feminist but, in fact, it may have been brilliant. Democrats desperately need to recover some of the ground they lost when Republicans voted to ban partial-birth abortion, a rare but gruesome procedure. In thrall to Kate Michelman and NARAL Pro-Choice America, many Democrats voted no because they could only see the hypocrisy of pro-lifers who also oppose condoms and turn a blind eye to those who would kill a doctor to protect a zygote.

What Hillary is saying now is that no matter how specious their partial-birth abortion ban, she recognizes that the world has changed since Roe v. Wade. She voted against the ban, but apparently now sees the light. Babies can now survive at 24 weeks, and yet the "health of the mother" exception has grown so large that a teenager seven months pregnant could slip through. Hillary hopes to appeal to that huge swath of voters who want to protect abortion but see themselves as pro-life.

In the same Jan. 24 speech, Hillary tried to turn the spotlight back on the sexual hypocrisy of the other side by bringing up the



bill she co-sponsored that would correct the ridiculous exclusion of birth control pills from insurance coverage, a lapse even more absurd now that the Bush administration's new drug benefit is going to cover erectile dysfunction pills. No to Ortho-Novum, which can prevent unwanted pregnancies, and yes to Viagra, which can, well, I won't go into it.

How's that for a mixture of sex discrimination and bad health policy? The little pink pill was excluded as a "lifestyle" drug. As you watch the ads for Gals, you decide what these little blue pills are for.

Sometimes Hillary is a victim of sexual politics; sometimes she exploits them. But so far, she hasn't transcended them. Once

again, her husband, who she once said "was a hard dog to keep on the porch," is off, first to Sri Lanka as a U.N. envoy, and if some old associates have their way, in a race to become United Nations secretary-general.

That effort makes you wonder whether Bill has signed on to a clever "stop Hillary" movement, or whether he sees the U.N. job as a way to assure potential Hillary voters that he will be too busy to interfere in domestic affairs, or to conduct ops.

I bet the latter. And I think it's about time he helped her. She's not just building a tent big enough to bring back some of those centrist voters for whom her party moved too far left, but one big enough to keep the dog on the porch.

Bad time to boo the messenger — or his message

President Bush said in his State of the Union speech last week that Social Security is heading toward bankruptcy, and — astonishingly — Democrats sitting in the House chamber booed. It was as if

Jay Ambrose



there had been a warning system in Indonesia that a tsunami was coming, but instead of running for their lives when it sounded, those on the beach cursed the thing. Smugly, stupidly cursed it.

If the Democrats stick with this denial and are able to defeat reform through the pre-emptive act that nothing much is amiss, the nation eventually will learn the hard way just how right Bush was.

As Bush pointed out, Social Security is a pay-as-you-go system. Despite Franklin Roosevelt's trickery to the effect that each worker had his own account, workers transfer a portion of the money they earn to Social Security beneficiaries. For a long time, this way worked. For every beneficiary there were 16 workers contributing payroll taxes to the beneficiary's pocketbook.

Then there was the post-war baby boom, and on top of that, vast numbers of people are now totting up four-score years of age and more. Today, we have three workers supporting each beneficiary. In a few more decades, Bush reminded us, there will be just two. A colleague of mine joked in a column once that each retiree would ultimately be dependent on just one worker. Choose your worker well, he joked — make sure this person is healthy, ambitious and

well-equipped to earn a robust wage.

But of course it is no joke that, by 2018, the amount due beneficiaries will outstrip the amount coming from the payroll taxes of workers. It will be double-whammy time. You will have to come up with tens of billions of dollars to pay the retirees and tens of billions of dollars to help finance other programs in the federal budget that were supported in part by the Social Security surplus.

Some people think the answer to the first part of the problem is simple. Just turn to the trust fund and take all that Social Security surpluses that have been mounting over the years. The problem is... [to get the money without prior reform, you are going to have to either tax or borrow or some combination of both, and the kicker is that the amount will be enormous and keep growing.

What you will have to do instead is reduce

the amount to be paid to beneficiaries along with maybe finding means of providing for them besides taxes or borrowing. There is a need to act quickly, making sure to hold safe anyone now receiving benefits or within a decade's reach of them, so that those affected by adjustments have time to adjust themselves. Bush thrust over several possibilities suggested in the past by Democrats, such as tying the amount of benefits to prices rather than wages or increasing the retirement age.

Bush has another, excellent idea. It is to establish voluntary, individual retirement accounts for younger workers. When the proposition is brought up, any number of seemingly sophisticated commentators practically do back flips to show they don't understand something basic. They avow that if you allow this money to be invested, you are removing it from Social Security. But you aren't.

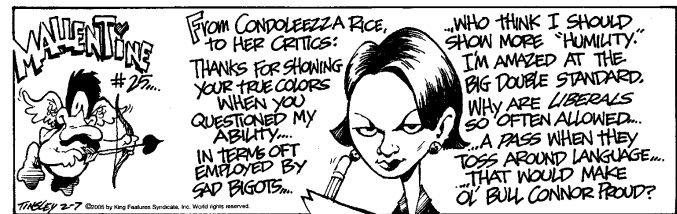
Along with the interest it will almost surely earn over the years, it will be used to pay future retirees. If it stays in the system. It's true that the portion that goes for the accounts won't be available to pay current retirees and that we are thus brought closer to the day of reckoning. That day, however, is certain to come at any rate and, meanwhile, the accounts will do something significant to fix and improve Social Security.

Of course, if you believe beyond all reason on evidence that there is no cause for concern, you can justify your obstructionism. You can just stand on that beach and watch that big wave come at you. It won't be just coming at the Democratic members of Congress, however, or those Republicans who abet them. It will come at all of us.

Jay Ambrose, formerly the Washington director of editorial policy for Scripps Howard Newspapers, is a columnist living in Colorado.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



Uninspected oil

NM ALBUQUERQUE — An environmental group says oil and gas wells in five western states aren't being inspected often enough, and the inspections that are done are more likely for production than ecological concerns.

In a report released, the Western Organization of Resource Councils said New Mexico, Colorado, Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota have 79 percent of the active wells on Bureau of Land Management land nationwide, but only 26 percent of the inspectors.

Inspections do not keep up with the rapid pace of oil and gas development, few enforcement actions are taken even when problems are identified, and citizens' complaints often are ignored, according to the report.

King memorial repairs

GA ATLANTA — The memorial where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. is buried needs \$11.6 million in repairs, according to a National Park Service report.

Problems include fire hazards and leaks at the center's archive building, which houses King's papers and other important documents from the civil rights movement, according to the report, which was obtained by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

"I was surprised at the extent of the problems," said Frank Catropa, superintendent of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site.

The King family controls the 24-year-old center through a non-profit corporation. The National Park Service manages the site but does not operate the King Center.

Taxing bull semen

ME AUGUSTA — Maine's dairy and beef farmers are furiously over a tax on bull semen that has been on the books for decades but only recently began appearing on bills for artificial insemination.

Genex Cooperative Inc., Maine's largest livestock semen distributor, previously had absorbed the tax. But as more states began initiating a tax on semen, company officials said they no longer could afford it.

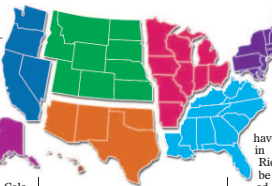
The tax is a minimum of \$800 to \$1,000 per year on an average small dairy farm, and up to \$5,000 for some of Maine's largest dairy operations.

This extra expenditure has pushed many farmers to lobby the state Legislature's Agriculture Committee to amend the sales tax laws to exempt semen.

The exemption has the backing of the Maine Farm Bureau, the Maine Dairy Industry Improvement Association and the Maine Beef Producers Association, among other groups.

Animals to be tracked

WA YAKIMA — State agricultural officials have begun assigning identification numbers to farms and ranches — a precursor to a broader animal identification system aimed at making it easier to track livestock in the future.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

The ability to trace livestock became crucial following the discovery of the nation's first case of mad cow disease in a Washington state Holstein in December 2003. The cow's origins were later traced to Canada, but not before dozens of countries closed their borders to U.S. beef products.

In the months since, authorities nationally have been pushing for the ability to trace animals and food products within 48 hours.

Identifying where livestock animals are born, raised, fed, sold or handled is key to such a system.

Drug cards at school

WV CHARLESTON — Administrators are trying to figure out how a woman was able to wander into a high school and hand out discount cards for a 30-day supply of a prescription drug used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

The card given to students at Point Pleasant High School reads "Adderall XR Achievers Program" and directs cardholders to show it along with a doctor's prescription to a pharmacist for redemption.

"My daughter told me that a woman with a visitor's pass on was handing it out at school," a mother, who asked to remain anonymous,



Church moves

Kuhn's House Moving, of Victoria, Kan., moves the Esque Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal Church building down a Pawnee County road near Larned, Kan. The abandoned church, which had served the black community, was moved from town to the Santa Fe Trail Center 2 miles west of town, where it will be restored.

told The Charleston Gazette. "The woman told her that it helps people to pay attention."

Mason County policy requires all visitors to sign in at the main offices of all schools.

"As far as we know, we have not had anyone like that in our building," Principal Rick Northrup said. "It may be that a person misrepresented herself, but we don't know."

A Kinky candidate

TX SAN ANTONIO — Muslim-turned-mystery author Kinky Friedman is promising an unconventional campaign in his independent bid to get elected Texas governor next year.

Wearing blue jeans, black cowboy hat, a black fringed Western jacket and smoking a cigar, Friedman announced his candidacy in front of the Alamo.

"We're going to wake up this great slumbering giant of Texas independence," he said.

About 200 people attended the announcement, which the 60-year-old Friedman made after an invocation from country singer-songwriter Billy Joe Shaver. It comes some 13 months before Democrats and Republicans select their nominees, whom Friedman has labeled "decaf or regular, paper or plastic."

Jewel theft manhunt

NY NEW YORK — A nationwide search was under way for a man accused of killing three jewelers during a robbery spree in New York and Connecticut.

Authorities believe Christopher DiMeo, 23, chatted up jewelry store employees and said he was looking for an engagement ring before he pulled out a gun and robbed them.

He allegedly took a total of nearly \$300,000 worth of merchandise.

In the most recent attack, jewelry store owner Timothy Donnelly and his wife Kimberly Ann were killed and robbed of an undetermined amount in Fairfield, Conn.

DiMeo also is accused of killing Thomas Remison and stealing about \$100,000 worth of jewelry on Dec. 21 in Glen Head, N.Y.

Bus driver arrested

NC CHARLOTTE — A school bus driver who had been drinking was tracked down by authorities after one of his passengers called 911 from a cell phone and reported the man was asleep at the wheel, authorities said.

Vernon Tobias Wallace, 23, was charged with driving with alcohol in his system after police and school officials finally found him and pulled over his bus. Another driver finished the route.

None of the 30 or so students headed for Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology was injured, according to a school district spokeswoman. Police would not release test results of Wallace's blood-alcohol level but said it was below 0.04 percent. The legal blood-alcohol level in North Carolina is 0.08 percent for recreational drivers, 0.04 percent for commercial drivers and 0.02 percent for drivers of school buses and daycare vans.



See, it looks like a heart The long necks of a pair of black swans form the shape of a heart while the birds nest at a pond at Deer Acres Zoo in Hackett, Ark. Black swans mate for life and are the only swan native to Australia.



Wild and woolly Event judge Wayne Sanders inspects Star, Victoria Park's fine wool cross lamb, during competition in the medium-weight division at the Cameron County Fair and Livestock Show in Los Fresnos, Texas.



Fastest outhouse wins The team from Northern Distributor, right, wins a heat of the annual outhouse race, the featured event of the annual Lake George, N.Y., Winter Carnival. Northern Distributor won the event.



Showing off

Twiggy the water-skiing squirrel does a lap of his pool during a demonstration at the Tulsa Boat Show in Tulsa, Okla.



Mardi Gras fun

Christopher Richardson, left, gives Ja'Nell Cody, center, of Atlanta, a turn playing his washboard on Bourbon Street in New Orleans. Parades rolled through new Orleans all weekend, culminating with Fat Tuesday this week.



Best of the best

Members of the Wade Hampton High School Air Force JROTC of Greenville, S.C., compete in the Facsimile Regulation competition during the National JROTC Drill Team Championships, held in Montgomery, Ala.



Watch granny go!

Eloise Robinson reacts as she slides downhill after getting a push from her granddaughter Christiana Zanger, 3, at Nelson Field in Bristol, Conn.

Prison flu epidemic

ND BISMARCK — North Dakota State Penitentiary officials say the prison has come down with the flu. Warden Tim Schuetzle, a deputy warden and the prison's chief of security were among 17 staff members who got sick, as did more than 100 inmates. The population of the penitentiary and the state prison farm totals about 870.

Infants contracted herpes

NY NEW YORK — City health officials are investigating the death of a baby boy who was one of three infants to contract herpes after a rabbi circumcised them.

Ten days after Rabbi Yitzchok Fischer performed religious circumcisions on twins last October, one died of herpes and the other tested positive for the virus, according to a complaint filed by the health department in Manhattan Supreme Court.

Under Jewish law, a mohel — someone who performs circumcisions — draws blood from the circumcision wound. Most mohels do it by hand, but Fischer uses a rare practice where he uses his mouth.

Fischer's lawyer, Mark Kurzman, told the Daily News that Fischer was cooperating with the investigation, although it's unclear whether Fischer submitted to the city's request for a blood test.

Wife indicted in death

TX LAKE JACKSON — A woman has been indicted on negligent homicide charges for allegedly giving her husband a sherry enema that killed him.

Michael Warner, 58, died last May after the enema caused his blood-alcohol level to rise to .47 percent.

"That's extremely high," Detective L. Robert Turner said. "You're either going to be in the hospital or the funeral home with that much alcohol."

Tammy Warner, 42, was indicted.

Turner said Michael Warner was an alcoholic who could not swallow liquid because of ulcers and heartburn.

Tammy Warner was released on \$30,000 bail.

Transvestite admits guilt

GA ALBANY — A transvestite who pumped industrial silicone into other men to give them feminine features pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the death of a man who suffered complications.

Stephen Thomas, 31, will serve five years in prison and 10 years on probation under the plea to felony involuntary manslaughter, which he entered.

The plea was appropriate because those involved were willing participants and there was no intent to kill, Chief Assistant District Attorney Greg Edwards said.

eBay cans date auction

MN WILLMAR — A teenager auctioning himself as a prom date has been booted off eBay — but he's still stealing the shirt off his back.

Nathan Carlson offered himself for auction after a conversation with some friends at Ridgewater

College. The bidding started at \$30.

But as the bids came in and exceeded \$260, Carlson added a comment that he'd contribute half the money to charity if the bidding went past \$1,500 — a big no-no for the online auction site.

That comment violated eBay's policies on auctions to benefit charity, and the Web site ended the auction.

Air-quality control

CA SAN FRANCISCO — Air-quality regulators have started clamping down on idling trucks and buses belching unhealthful pollutants.

State inspectors, aided by police and the California Highway Patrol, are enforcing a new rule that prohibits diesel-fueled trucks from standing with engines idling for more than five minutes and buses for more than 10 minutes.

Drivers caught ignoring it could get a citation carrying a minimum civil penalty of \$100 and one of a range of criminal penalties.

DI doesn't set record

FL WINTER PARK — A college disc jockey who thought he set a world record for the longest continuous radio broadcast has discovered that he apparently fell 10 hours short.

Dave Plotkin has been informed by officials at Guinness world records that his recent 110-hour, three-minute broadcast on Rollins College's WPRK-FM wasn't good enough for the all-time longest.

Actually, Guinness says that according to its records, a Sri Lankan man, Arulanantham Suresh Joachim, stayed on the air a record 120 hours in June 2003. Guinness says it took a year and a half to complete the documentation and update its database.

"Please send our apologies," said Sam Knights, a Guinness spokesman.

Plotkin said he plans an attempt of 144 hours by next year, if the station allows it.

Too cold for trouble

ME WATERVILLE — The nose-numbing cold that put Maine in the deep-freeze for much of January was enough to keep many Mainers in the warmth of their homes.

It also keeps crime rates down, law enforcement officials say.

In fact, crime rates generally go up and down in tandem with the rise and fall of outdoor temperatures, according to Maine Department of Public Safety statistics.

In 2003, Maine recorded 2,104 serious crimes in February and 3,387 crimes in July, a 61 percent increase over the span.

Lobbyist spending

WI MADISON — The state's largest teacher's union and the biggest business group spent the most money trying to influence lawmakers during the last two-year legislative session, according to state Ethics Board reports. Wisconsin Education Association Council spent \$1.5 million to Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce spent \$1.3 million. They were among groups that spent \$48.5 million on lobbying.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

Marsalis drums pop culture

Former 'Tonight Show' player yarns for authenticity in music

BY CHARLES J. GANS

The Associated Press

Branford Marsalis has no regrets about casting aside what to many would seem the trappings of a successful musical career — the gigs as bandleader-sidekick on "The Tonight Show" and musical director of Sting's post-Police band, even a contract with a major record label.

He has plugged his ears to the siren call of pop stardom, and shuns the spotlight of the fast-paced L.A. and New York scenes. "I learned a lot about American pop culture and the entertainment business," said Marsalis, describing the lessons gained from his "Tonight" show experience from 1992 to '95.

"What makes entertainment work for everybody is a certain embracing of the blatant superficiality of it, and that's just something that I wasn't able to do. ... It was the revelation I needed to realize that I'm not an entertainer, I'm an artist."

Today, the 44-year-old Marsalis is living his life and defining success on his own terms. In 2002, he started his own record label, Marsalis Music, and moved his family from the New York City suburbs to Durham, N.C., where he was able to purchase a house large enough to accommodate a basement recording studio. Marsalis, a New Orleans native, said he preferred returning to his Southern roots to raise his family.

"My son had turned 15 and I just felt at the time that he needed to be in an environment where there's less of an overt embrace of materialism ... and that tremendous sense of entitlement," said Marsalis. "In New York, the second or third question when you meet someone is 'What do you do?' ... Most people in Durham don't know what I do or who I am, and that's great."

Marsalis mostly performs these days with his quartet at jazz clubs, festivals and college campuses. He occasionally appears with symphony orchestras to perform a classical repertoire. His current quartet — which includes Joe Calderazzo, bassist Eric Revis, and drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts, whose links with Marsalis go back to the late '70s at Boston's Berklee College of Music — has been together for nearly six years.

Marsalis' quartet had built a reputation for its muscular high-intensity playing on "burnout" uptempo numbers. But the group shows a more sensitive side on its first all-ballads album, "Eternal," which has been nominated for a Grammy as best jazz instrumental album. The saxophonist previously won three Grammys in jazz and pop categories.

The album's seven tracks, with Marsalis switching between tenor and soprano saxophones, include three somewhat obscure covers — "The Ruby and the Pearl," done in a sultry semi-bolero style, which Nat King Cole and later Wayne Shorter recorded; "Dinner for One Please, James," which acknowledges the influence of tenor legend Ben Webster's lyrical and romanticism, and "Gloomy Sunday," a mournful song of yearning associated with Billie Holiday.

Each of the quartet's members contributed an original ballad, including Marsalis, whose 17-minute "Eternal" is dedicated to wife Nicole.

"The hardest thing about playing a ballad is that ballads are essentially un-American. The American ideal is to rise above the group through individual achievement," said Marsalis, interviewed over lunch at a hotel just down the street from the Time Warner Center, where he had performed with his father, pianist Ellis, and three of his brothers (trumpeter Wynton, trombonist Delfonzo and drummer Jaceo) at the gala opening of Frederick P. Rose Hall (the new home of Jazz at Lincoln Center founded by younger brother Wynton).

"The idea of playing a ballad is basically sacrificing one's personal ambitions for the more unified goal of making the song as beautiful as possible ... and it's hard to get musicians on board with that philosophy in an era where a lot of jazz musicians are rewarded for their amazingly technical virtuosic solos."

Marsalis says the ballads album wouldn't have been possible if the quartet had not tackled John Coltrane's legendary 1964 suite, "A Love Supreme," a deeply spiritual piece which jazz musicians have largely avoided playing, although Wynton recently recorded it with his Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. Branford's quartet performed the full suite on Marsalis Music's debut CD, "Footprints of Our Fathers," but gave a more definitive performance on their new DVD "Coltrane's A Love Supreme Live," recorded in 2003 at Amsterdam's Bimhuis Jazz Club.

The DVD, filmed by Emmy-winning director Pierre Lamoureux, captures all the nuances of the performance. It also contains a revealing 30-minute conversation between Marsalis and Coltrane's widow, Alice, and an audio-only disc of the 48-minute performance.

"I think a lot of musicians avoid playing 'A Love Supreme' because it's really hard to play and it's really easy to illuminate your weaknesses in a hurry," said Marsalis. "It forced us to deal with our own insecurities and how we wanted the group to sound ... It was good stamina, but playing that piece with that kind of intensity for 45 minutes was really exhausting. ... The concentration that is required is just staggering."

Marsalis explains his decision to leave Columbia/Sony after nearly



Musician Branford Marsalis performed in January at The Village Vanguard in New York. "I learned a lot about American pop culture and the entertainment business," said Marsalis, describing the lessons gained from his "Tonight Show" experience from 1992-95. Today, the 44-year-old Marsalis finds himself living his life and defining success on his own terms.

20 years as the result of a difference of philosophy. He felt Sony's music division was emphasizing the entertainment value rather than the music.

With his own label, Marsalis wants to give the musicians, including such newcomers as Puerto Rican alto saxophonist Miguel Zenon and the Tennessee-born country jazz guitarist Doug Wamble, time to nurture their hands and develop their audience, but he doesn't feel it's his job to tell them what to record.

Harry Connick Jr., who describes Marsalis as "one of the most generous people that I've ever known," says he jumped at the chance to do a straight-ahead nonvocals instrumental jazz record, "Other Hours," for the saxophonist's label.

"A lot of the values that I have come from him, and if I had to sum up Branford in one sentence it's: He does what he loves to do," said Connick. "I like watching his creative process and we actually share that. He doesn't like to prepare. I'm a big fan of true improvisation and not really working out things too much and he's also much like that."

"Branford has found his own voice on his instrument, and at this late day in the development of jazz that's pretty amazing."

Fashionable first lady

The models included Christie Brinkley, Sheryl Crow, Venus Williams and Paula Abdul, but all eyes were on first lady **Laura Bush** when she attended The Heart Truth runway show at New York Fashion Week.

Bush wore a deep-red velvet jacket, perfect for the occasion: a charity fashion show called The Red Dress Collection that aimed to raise awareness about heart disease in women.



Bush

Twenty-six designers, including Vera Wang, Zac Posen and Oscar de la Renta, donated their time and dresses — and celebrities wore them on the catwalk.

Bush is the national ambassador for The Heart Truth Campaign, sponsored by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health.

Rocker charged in fight

Rock singer **Pete Doherty**, the former frontman of The Libertines, has been charged with robbery and blackmail, police in London said.

The 25-year-old musician was arrested Wednesday after a reported fracas at a London hotel. He appeared at Highbury Corner Magistrates' Court Friday. His lawyer, **Sean Curran**, said the singer would spend the weekend in jail because the \$280,000 bail couldn't be raised immediately.

Another musician, **Alan Wass**, 23, was charged with the same offenses and was granted bail.

Doherty's spokesman, **Tony Linkin**, said the singer was arrested over allegations he assaulted filmmaker **Max Carlish**, who was making a documentary about Doherty's new group, **Babysambles**.

Doherty, who is widely reported to be dating supermodel **Kate Moss**, was kicked out of The Libertines after failing to curb his publicly acknowledged drug problems.

Sharpton takes on KFC

The Rev. **Ai Sharpton** has joined PETA in calling for a ban of fast-food chain **KFC**, in a new TV and radio campaign.

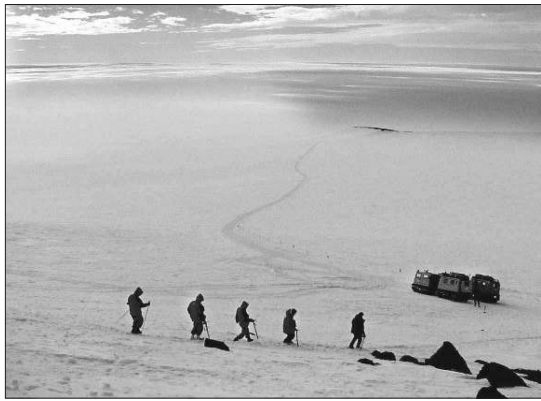
"Sharpton is urging the black community to join the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals' boycott of the animal franchise, as the animal protection group announced Thursday."

"If KFC wants to take our money and use it to pay for sloppy practices that hurt animals, I say we send them a message. I say this is not going to happen," Sharpton says in the ad.

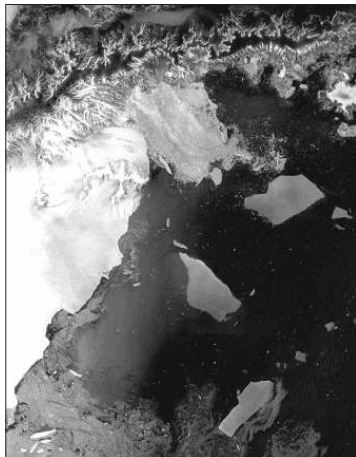
Stories and photos from The Associated Press



Sharpton



Above: With a view of the Ross Ice Shelf out in front of them, officials make their way back to the vehicles that carried them across the snow and ice surrounding Scott Base, Antarctica, in this Jan. 26, 1999, photo. Right: The Larsen B ice shelf, a large floating ice mass on the eastern side of the Antarctic Peninsula that has shattered and separated from the continent, is seen in this March 18, 2002, satellite image.



ENVISAT SATELLITE PHOTO/AP

Scientists puzzled by melting in Antarctica

Collapsing ice shelves could bring slow-motion, permanent disaster

BY CHARLES J. HANLEY
The Associated Press

PUNTA ARENAS, Chile — Scientists looking southward from the tip of South America, over steel-gray waters toward icy Antarctica, see only questions on the horizon about the fate of the planet.

Now that one mammoth Antarctic ice shelf has collapsed into the ocean, when might another, bigger one crumble and slip into a warming sea? In 1,000 years? In 100 years? Sooner? Never? "People don't have the answer to the question yet — what the probability is of that collapse, if any," said scientist Gino Casassa. "But there's some indication of instability."

Casassa and fellow Chilean researchers had just flown back from the icy continent to this expedition staging point, and brought with them some potentially unsettling news.

On a two-month roundtrip trek by snow tractor to the South Pole, they pointed their sophisticated radar at the ground and found that the West Antarctic Ice Sheet may be thicker than thought, many hundreds of feet thicker in parts.

Glaciologists like Casassa worry most about that western ice sheet, half a continent of frozen water believed enough, if gradually melted, to raise ocean levels worldwide by about 15 feet.

That would be a slow-motion catastrophe for global coastlines — not instantly deadly like a tsunami, but more universal and permanent. And "the deeper the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, the greater the potential impact to

sea level," Casassa pointed out, though cautioning that their data await full analysis.

Such pressing questions about the white continent and global warming — and the impact each will have on the other — are consuming more and more scientific resources these days, as hundreds of researchers migrate south in the southern summer to probe, measure and observe in an on-the-ice search for answers.

Advanced technology, like the radar lent by the University of Kansas, allows scientists to penetrate darker corners of polar science. ICESat, a NASA satellite launched two years ago, is giving them an unprecedented precise look at the state of the ice in both the Arctic and Antarctic. The same U.S. space agency, meanwhile, is boosting the power of its supercomputers to speed through millions of calculations to foresee temperature, evaporation, precipitation and other changes far into the future, using complex climate models.

The challenges remain huge, however, on the globe's most forbidding landscape. And technology sometimes fails. One of the ice-surveying satellite's laser eyes went dead, for one thing, reducing its useful data by more than half. For another, the vast continent has too few permanent monitoring stations to give scientists more than a sketchy grasp of its climate behavior.

"Even now, we're not so sure what's going on in all Antarctica. There aren't sufficient data," said Argentina's Pedro Skvarca, a veteran Antarctic glaciologist.

The hunt for data took on fresh

urgency after Antarctica's "Larsen B," an ice shelf bigger than Luxembourg, collapsed into the Southern Ocean over the space of just 35 days in 2002.

The 1,300 square miles of ice had fringed the Antarctic Peninsula, a rocky arm of land that reaches north to within 750 miles of this southernmost Chilean city. In that peninsular region, average surface temperatures have risen by 4.5 degrees Fahrenheit over 50 years.

"Even now, we're not so sure what's going on in all Antarctica. There aren't sufficient data."

Pedro Skvarca
Antarctic glaciologist

Temperatures globally rose about 1 degree Fahrenheit in the past century, most of that attributed by scientific consensus to the accumulation in the atmosphere of carbon dioxide and other warming "greenhouse gases," mostly from fossil fuel-burning. It hasn't been established whether the Antarctic Peninsula warming stems directly from global warming, or from more localized conditions.

Because an ice "shelf" already floats on the sea, displacing its weight in water, Larsen B's disintegration — and that of the smaller, nearby Larsen A in 1995 — didn't raise ocean levels. But what has happened since did.

Skvarca and American researchers, collating aerial reconnaissance with ICESat images, reported last September that land-based glaciers backed up behind Larsen B have accelerated their flow since its breakup — moving ice into the sea up to eight times faster than before.

Now scientists are warily watching the Larsen C ice shelf, farther south and 20 times larger. Like the B sector before it collapsed, "Larsen C also appears to be thinning," said Robert Thomas, a researcher at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center facility in Maryland. "It's quite possible that the thinning is the precursor to the breakup."

Scientists expect Larsen C to disintegrate sometime in this century, Skvarca said in a telephone interview from Buenos Aires.

"We should bear in mind what is happening to the Larsen ice shelves, because if it also happens to a big shelf, we are going to be in trouble," he said.

"Big" refers to the floating giants — the Ross and Ronne ice shelves. Each is around 200,000 square miles. They lie deeper south in a more frigid zone, are thicker in depth and hold back immense streams of ice coming from the heights of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, the 1,100-mile-wide, 9,000-foot-high dome that sits atop continental rock.

No one has spotted signs of instability yet in the two giant shelves. But scientists also worry about what Thomas calls the "back door" — a stretch of Antarctic coast whose glaciers feed off the western ice sheet directly into the Amundsen Sea, or into small ice shelves on that sea.

"There's some indication of instability in the Amundsen Sea," Casassa said.

Glaciologists are quick to point out they've found no basis for fearing an imminent, massive collapse of ice into the southern seas. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a U.N.-organized network of scientists, concluded in a 2001 assessment that the impact of global warming "will be realized slowly" in Antarctica.

Although scientists assume major change might take a millennium, much remains unknown about the links among ice, ocean and skies.

It isn't known, for example, how excess amounts of cold, fresh water from glaciers, pouring into the salty sea, will affect the ocean current that circles Antarctica from west to east — a main driver of all the world's ocean currents, and hence of world climate.

In powerful computers, by satellite and on the Antarctic ice, the stepped-up search for answers will go on.

Like others, Skvarca sees a need for a bigger, better coordinated international effort. The Argentine scientist recalled the "premonitory" work of the late Ohio State University glaciologist John Mercer, who forecast in the 1970s that warming would cause the Antarctic Peninsula ice shelves to disintegrate, from north to south. At the time, "nobody paid much attention," Skvarca said.

"Let's not wait 30 years more to see whether Larsen C and others disintegrate. There's an urgent need for research now."



EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to lower 30s.

Britain, Ireland: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain. Highs in the mid to upper 40s. Tuesday lows in the upper 30s to lower 40s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Partly cloudy with dense overcast fog. Highs in the upper 20s to lower 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper teens.

France: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to lower 30s.

Northern Germany: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper teens to lower 20s.

Southern Germany: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 30s. Tuesday lows in the lower teens to lower 20s.

Hungary: Sunny. Highs in the upper 20s. Tuesday lows in the single digits.

Northern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 30s. Tuesday lows in the lower 20s to lower 30s.

Southern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 40s to lower 50s. Tuesday lows in the upper 30s.

Kosovo: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 30s. Tuesday lows in the mid teens.

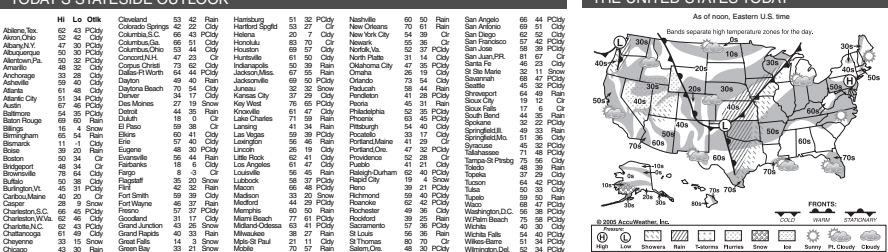
Norway: Cloudy with isolated rain and snow showers. Highs in the lower to upper 30s. Tuesday lows in the upper 20s to mid 30s.

Portugal, Spain: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 40s to lower 50s. Tuesday lows in the lower 30s to lower 40s.

Turkey: Mostly cloudy with isolated rain and snow showers. Highs in the lower 40s to lower 50s in the coastal regions, lower 30s inland. Tuesday lows in the lower to mid 30s in the coastal regions, upper teens inland.



TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK



Scheduled on **ETS** or **PCS**

Check our Relocation Guide every Saturday to find Realtors at your new station.

STARS AND STRIPES
Your Hometown Newspaper

Horoscope

The moon enters Aquarius, joining the planetary sores going on in the sign of societal unity. Rub elbows with all kinds. The more open you are to communication, the more you learn, which is the point now. Building the intellect will in turn build society. You don't have to be serious about it, though. Much of the learning comes through osmosis.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(February 7). Sweeping changes are in store. Beginning next month, self-promotion nets you lucrative new business, bringing interesting developments in May and August and possibly leading you down an entirely new and exciting career path come October. Your social life heats up after July, with December being the most romantic month of the year.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Tight bulb of innovation clicks on for you, brightening your outlook and helping you see your path more clearly. Don't be surprised if it leads you to another country. Your wanderlust is paying. Will you answer?

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

A steamy interlude is in the works when an intriguing someone sparks your interest, causing you to take bold action. A relative or business person could make you a financial offer you can't refuse. Think it over first.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Feeling ready to take the next step in a relationship or business partnership? The mood is right to make your intentions known. Unattached Gerns who've been holding back are inspired to jump into the dating game again.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Implement positive changes in your daily routine to help you do your work faster and live healthier. Small improvements like a software upgrade or drinking more water make a big difference in your ability to accomplish goals.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Admit it, you're dying to sink your ion tangs into a sumptuous new creative

project. Why are you waiting? The stars are shining in your favor. Just don't forget to make time for your sweetheart. Love is in the air.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Whether you mean to fully renovate your home or just buy a new comfort-er for your bed, you will benefit by changing the look and feel of your environment. If you can envision it, you can achieve it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

Overcome a communication impasse by trying a different approach. If you're not having any luck getting your calls returned, try sending an e-mail or fax — maybe even show up in person. Or take the Zen approach, and drop it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

Don't give up if your New Year's resolution is proving harder to keep than anticipated. Forgive yourself for backsliding, and simply vow to try harder. Financial commitments are particularly slippery.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

If something in your life that used to bring you joy now feels like excess baggage, set plans into motion to change your situation. Creative brainstorming with a friend helps you see exciting alternatives.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You may be harboring hidden resentment of which even you are completely unaware. If you're feeling defensive, pay attention. This is a valuable clue to help you unlock your psyche and release toxic stress.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Fight for your right to party! While you're out there saving the world with your political or humanitarian causes, you're no doubt having a rockin' good time. You may even meet someone who alters the course of your life.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

There's no time like the present to make that big pitch or presentation and launch your career into the next dimension. If signing contracts, make sure you're happy with the terms — this deal will have long-term staying power.

Creators Syndicate

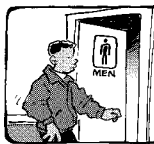
Holiday Mathis



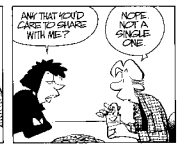
Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



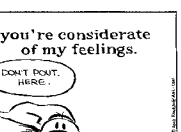
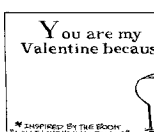
Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



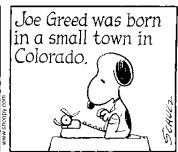
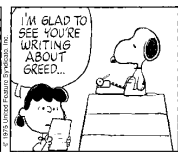
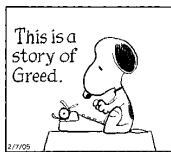
Red and Rover



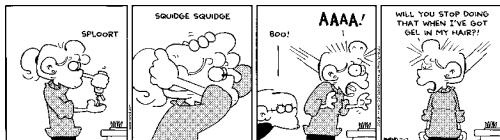
Better or Worse



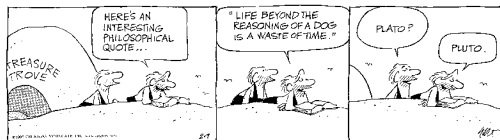
Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



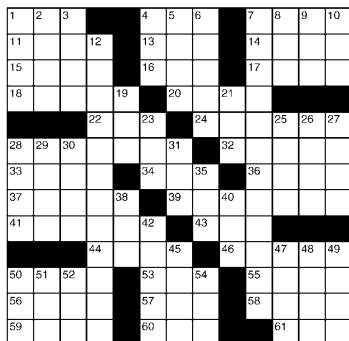
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



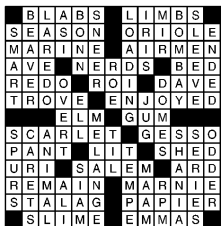
Across

- 1 Beast of burden
- 4 Gelfin
- 7 Took off
- 11 Engage in idling
- 13 Wish undone
- 14 Leo's comment
- 15 "Ironside" star
- 16 "Jeopardy!" juggernaut
- 17 Horribly wrong
- 18 Jennifer Garner series
- 20 Knock for a loop
- 22 Actress Peoples
- 24 Making inquiries
- 28 Nutty
- 32 Michaelmas daisy
- 33 Malaria symptom
- 34 Chart
- 36 "Got it"
- 37 Dustin Hoffman biopic

Down

- 1 Actress Jessica
- 2 Devil's purchase
- 3 Agra attire
- 4 Annoy
- 5 Poolroom needs
- 6 Busybody
- 7 "Chairman of the Board"
- 8 Depressed
- 9 Listening device
- 10 Parched
- 12 Karloff portayal
- 13 Sprech — Deutsch?
- 21 Mex. neighbor
- 23 Branch
- 25 "Wonderful Life"
- 26 Opposite of "always"
- 27 Swayze's "Dirty Dancing" co-star
- 28 Ointment
- 29 Curved molding
- 30 Convent group
- 31 React to gravity
- 35 Expert
- 38 "Indubitably"
- 40 Rd.
- 42 Dieter's lunch
- 45 Double Dutch prop
- 47 Pit
- 48 Verve
- 49 Tear
- 50 Tackle moguls
- 51 Melody
- 52 Only even prime
- 54 Church seat

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-7

CRYPTOQUIP

V Q V T N E L W K J R R N K M V W E
T P N L M X - Q P N A X N W N P
U P L D D N P A, V ' G U L W M M X N O

V W O V W M K J W G V M V J W.
Saturday's Cryptquip: WHEN A BASEBALL RELIEVER HAS FLU SYMPTOMS, ONE COULD SAY HE THROWS AT A FEVER PITCH.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: K equals C

Confront cousin about doll theft

Dear Abby: Heartsick is the only way I can describe how I feel right now. Something very precious to me, an antique doll, has disappeared from its storage place in my bedroom and has been replaced by a similar doll that I have never seen before. The only person besides my husband who knew of its existence was my cousin "Lana." Lana and her husband have been weekend houseguests in our home for several years. A few weeks ago, we let them use our bedroom and we took the guest room.



Dear Abby

The other day I went to the chest where I kept the doll, intending to have it appraised, and found something else in its place. I have no solid proof that Lana took it, but the circumstances and family history all point in that direction. You see, the doll was a family heirloom given to me by my aunt 15 years ago.

As far as I'm concerned, the

relationship between my cousin and me has been seriously affected. What should be my next step?

—Heartsick in N.C.

Dear Heartsick: Call Cousin Lana and tell her what you have told me. Perhaps she was upset that the heirloom doll wasn't given to her, or assumed that you wouldn't know the difference if another doll was substituted. Ask her to please return the original.

If she is unwilling to cooperate, you could report the theft to the police and fill out a stolen property report.

Dear Abby: How do you get someone's name off junk mail lists when that person has died? My sister passed away last May. I had all of her mail forwarded to my house. I specifically contacted all the bill collectors and her friends and gave them my address, but her junk mail has found its way to me. Many of the

catalogs and charities used the address correction service, thinking my sister had moved to my address, and now they send their stuff to me.

How can I make it stop? I don't want this stuff. The Direct Mail Marketing organization says that this request cannot be made by a second party.

—Had Enough in Citrus Heights

Dear Had Enough: With a black marking pen, cross out the bar code on the envelopes and write "Deceased, Return to Sender." Then put the items back in your mailbox. Eventually the senders will get the message and the unwanted mail will stop.

Also, if you call the 800 numbers for the catalogs and explain the situation, most will cooperate and remove your sister's name and your address from their lists.

Letters for this column—with your name and phone number—should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.ueppress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NATEC

DYSIA

HASRIG

TENTIK

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www.jumble.com

Answer: "CITRUS"

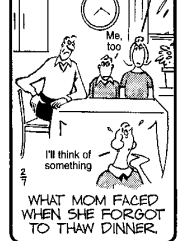
Answers tomorrow

Saturday's Jumbles: ELITE APART INFECT SICKEN

Answer: Often turning around a back yard — A PICKET FENCE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrion



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Crayons not part of balanced diet

Dear Annie: I am a 35-year-old woman with four children, an advanced degree and no serious health problems, but I have compulsively and secretly been eating crayons for months. I don't mean chewing on a crayon here and there. I mean eating an entire 64-count box, and doing it several times a week. I can't stop, and I don't know why I'm doing this.



Annie's Mailbox

I am too embarrassed to tell my doctor, because I know he'll think I am crazy. The box says the crayons are non-toxic, but I'm really eating a lot of them. And this is a really dumb question, but are they fattening? Why am I doing this? Am I crazy? Please help.

—Crayon Freak

Dear Crayon Freak: We have no idea how many crayons are in a 64-count box of crayons, but that's the least of your worries. You may have pica, a disease where people eat non-food substances (dirt is the most common). Pica is usually caused by a

nutritional deficiency, often iron or zinc, and it can sometimes occur during pregnancy. There is apparently something about the contents or texture of crayons that you crave.

While crayons are considered non-toxic, they are not intended to be eaten, especially in such large quantities. You are not crazy, but you do need to see your doctor and ask to be tested. Don't wait until you finish the next box.

Dear Annie: I have been with my boyfriend, "James," for three years.

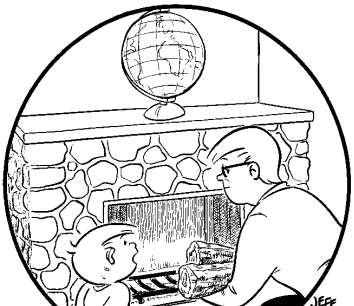
Last year, we moved in together with the understanding that we would become engaged shortly. (We're both nearly 30.) I was fully expecting that ring. A few months ago, I mentioned that I thought it was time we made definite plans. James' mother got wind of it and freaked out. She called me, saying marriage is no guarantee that

he won't walk out on me someday. (James' parents had a rather nasty divorce when he was young.) Last night, James told me I might not be getting a ring at all. I was shocked, hurt and angry. He claims he still wants to marry me—he just can't say when. I think it all comes down to his mother. She told him it would kill her if she heard news about a marriage. I don't know what to do. I've asked him to go for counseling, but he refuses. Should I wait this out and hope he comes around?—Lovesick

Dear Lovesick: James is tied rather tightly to Mom's apron strings. She undoubtedly "got wind of" your marriage plans because he told her. Decide right now if you want to stay with someone whose mother will always come first, because that's the way it's going to be.

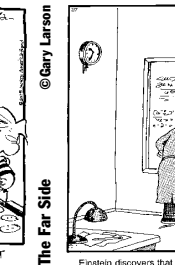
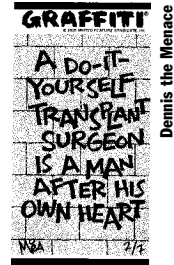
Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime writers of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



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"If you light that fire we're gonna have global warming."



Jakes, Hags and Cavs on pace

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Before leaving court, LeBron James grabbed a microphone and politely asked the sellout crowd in Gund Arena to wish his mother a happy birthday.

A few moments earlier, he helped bow out the Orlando Magic's candles.

James had 30 points and 11 assists, and Zydrunas Ilgauskas made two big baskets in the

final 1:43 as the Cleveland Cavaliers began an important stretch at home with a 101-92 over Orlando on Saturday night.

Taking over when his team needed him, James had 18 points, six assists and four rebounds in the second half to help the Cavaliers revenge a season-long loss Tuesday night in Orlando.

Cleveland (27-19), which will play its next four games at Gund Arena, improved to 17-4 at home. "We're on a pace to win 50-some games, our goal is to get to 30 wins like the All-Star break," James said.

James made 12 of 13 free throws, missing his only attempt with 23 seconds left and the game already decided. He came in just 19-for-29 in his previous three games from the line.

After trailing by 11 points in the fourth, Orlando closed to 92-89 on rookie Dwight Howard's

free throw with 2:06 left. But Ilgauskas, playing with five fouls, tipped in his own miss, and after Sasha Pavlovic stole the ball from Grant Hill, Ilgauskas dropped a 6-foot fadeaway to make it 96-89 with 1:06 remaining.

"Ilgauskas is tough," said Orlando's Tony Battie, who played with Cleveland last season. "It's only a matter of time that he gets it, and he came up big at the end."

Wizards 12, Bucks 94: At Washington, a night after watching his team blow a big lead after he was ejected, Gilbert Arenas had 31 points, nine assists and six rebounds to help Washington snap a four-game losing streak.

On Friday night in Toronto, the Wizards blew a 22-point lead in 103-100 loss. They had a 15-point lead late in the third quarter when Arenas was ejected.

Washington's Arenas, in his 16th of his career-high 23 points in the second half for the Wizards.

Pacers 84, Hawks 79: Jermaine O'Neal scored 38 points to lead visiting Indiana to its second straight victory after a six-game losing streak.

O'Neal capped his night with 3.3 seconds remaining, throwing with 3.3 seconds left.

Suns 14, Knicks 106: At Phoenix, Amar'e Stoudemire had 32 points and 15 rebounds, and Steve Nash added 26 points and 14 assists for the Suns.

Stoudemire was his seventh in eight games for the Suns (38-11) and strengthened their lead in the

NBA's Pacific Division. It also gave them their first season sweep over the Knicks since 1994-95.

Nuggets 107, Warriors 91: Kenyon Martin had 24 points and nine rebounds, and host Denver limited high-scoring Jason Richardson to 13 points.

Carmelo Anthony added 18 points to help the Nuggets improve to 4-1 under new coach George Karl. Richardson, who had 42 points on 17-of-40 shooting in a Jan. 17 game against Denver, was 5-for-15 from the field.

Jazz 108, Hornets 92: At Salt Lake City, Carlos Boozer scored 18 points, and Andre Kirilenko and Matt Harpring each had 17 to help Utah snap a three-game losing streak.

Raja Bell added 16 points for Utah, which shot 53 percent from the field and led by as many as 28 points after blowing the game open in the third quarter.

Boston Nachbar led the Hornets with a career-high 21 points.

Heat 108, Bulls 97: At Miami, Shaquille O'Neal had 26 points and 10 rebounds, and Dwyane Wade scored 25 points to lead Miami to its fifth victory in six games.

Trail Blazers 114, Kings 108: Damon Stoudamire hit a long jumper and a driving layup in the 2nd minute to help host Portland hold off Sacramento.

Stoudamire had 23 points, with 30 points and eight assists, and Zach Randolph added 28 points and 12



Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James shoots over Orlando Magic's Steve Francis (3) on Saturday. James scored a team-high 30 points.

rebounds for the Trail Blazers.

SuperSonics 113, Bobcats 99: At Seattle, Ray Allen scored 25 points after missing two games because of the flu, leading Seattle

past expansion Charlotte.

Allen, who only returned to practice Friday, played 31 minutes in the first three quarters and made 9 of 14 shots, including two three-pointers.

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division			
	Pct	GB	
Boston	23	48	
LA Lakers	21	50	2
New York	20	42	3
Philadelphia	19	49	4
New Jersey	18	38	5
Southeast Division			
Miami	35	14	
Orlando	25	23	10
Charlotte	19	27	16
Atlanta	9	37	26
Central Division			
Detroit	28	59	6
San Antonio	27	56	9
Chicago	22	50	14
Indiana	18	48	20
Portland	17	47	21

Western Conference

Southwest Division			
	W	L	Pct
San Antonio	30	7	81
Dallas	25	16	61
Phoenix	21	20	51
Memphis	27	21	56
Golden State	19	19	50
Northwest Division			
Seattle	24	11	9
Minnesota	24	11	9
Portland	20	16	55
Utah	20	16	55
Pacific Division			
Phoenix	31	7	81
Sacramento	25	16	61
LA Clippers	20	21	49
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Sunday's games			
Dallas at Toronto			
Portland at Minnesota			
Clippers at Philadelphia			
LA Lakers at Houston			
Monday's games			
Atlanta at Washington			
LA Lakers at Atlanta			
Golden State at New York			
New York at P.J. 9 p.m.			

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San Antonio at Charlotte			
Toronto at LA Lakers			
Golden State at Portland			

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Carter has best game as Net to help snap Pistons' streak

By CHRIS SHERIDAN
The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The New Jersey Nets looked at their matchup against Detroit as a measuring stick game, and Vince Carter made sure they stood tall against the defending NBA champions.

Carter had his best game since joining the Nets, scoring 41 points and leading a second-half surge in a 107-85 victory Saturday that snapped the Pistons' five-game winning streak.

Carter, who finished 10 points shy of his career high, scored 20 of his points during a 29-9 run in the third and fourth quarters that turned a 63-61 edge into a 92-70 lead.

"This was the bar that we had to see how good we are against. We wanted to see where we are as a team, and that was a great effort," Carter said.

Carter's points were a season high, surpassing the 33 he scored Jan. 19 in a victory over Milwaukee that came 33 days after the Nets acquired him from Toronto.

New Jersey, 13-13 since the Carter trade, was coming off a lopsided loss at Boston that snapped their four-game winning streak.

"Was that Boston game an aberration? We wanted to redeem ourselves for that, and we wanted to

do it against a high-level team like Detroit," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said. "You always judge yourself against the best, and they have what we want."

Jason Kidd added 12 points and 14 assists, surpassing Kenny Anderson as the franchise leader in career assists with 2,364. Kidd also surpassed Bob Cousy (6,955) for 12th place on the NBA's all-time assists list.

Kidd passed Anderson with his final assist on a 19-foot jumper by Jason Collins that gave New Jersey a 99-73 lead with 5:02 remaining. He left to a standing ovation moments later.

"In 3½ years he shattered the organizational record. How long have the Nets been around? Twenty-something years? That's pretty good," Frank said.

Jabari Smith shot 7-for-7 and added 14 points for New Jersey, while Jacque Vaughn scored 12. Tayshaun Prince had 17 points and Antonio McDyess 15 for the Pistons, who couldn't stop the Nets once Carter got going.

"Nothing went right today. We were flat," Pistons forward Tayshaun Prince said. "We managed to cut it to two at halftime, but it was a bad third quarter. We weren't doing what we're supposed to do on defense, and that's what creates chaos."

Carter seized the momentum after he was smacked in the arm by Ben Wallace as he drove for a layup midway through the third quarter. No foul was called, although Carter was whistled for personal after he slammed into Wallace on the way back upcourt.

Carter said he was merely trying to chase down the referee who hadn't blown his whistle, colliding with Wallace when he cut in front of him. Carter claimed it did not inspire him, and he seemed genuinely surprised to hear how many points he scored in the ensuing run.

He followed with two free throws, a 5-foot runner, a 3-pointer, a layup and a steal before Kidd scored four straight points. Carter ended the third quarter by making a pair of foul shots and a 7-foot runner, then opened the fourth with a putback and a finger roll for an 83-65 lead.

"Once anybody gets going in this league, it's tough to stop them," Wallace said.

There would be no comeback from the Pistons, who lost for the first time since Jan. 24 and wrapped up a contentious eight-day stretch in which their coach Larry Brown, acknowledging his interest in perhaps becoming coach of the New York Knicks, backed off and said he plans to stay in Detroit.



Phil Mickelson, center, is greeted by fans while leaving the 16th green during the third round of the FBR Open in Scottsdale, Ariz., Saturday.

Fans favorite Lefty takes lead at FBR

The Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Cheered on by tens of thousands who consider him their hometown hero, Phil Mickelson forged a four-shot lead over Kevin Nahan through three rounds of the FBR Open, a giant party that happened to have a golf tournament going through it.

Mickelson, who tied the course record with a 60 on Friday, shot a 5-under 66 — with birdies on the final two holes — on Saturday for a 14-under 199 total on the 7,216-yard Tournament Players Club course.

"It was a fun round," Mickelson said. "I mean, there's a lot of people out there. It was pretty interesting. It felt like I shot over par because of yesterday, but it was good enough to get in the lead."

He leads going into a final round for the first time since last year's Masters, and then he was tied with Chris DiMarco.

Nahan, at 21 the youngest player on the PGA Tour, began the day tied for the lead with Mickelson, and still was even through 14, but his second shot went into the water on the 15th hole, then he missed a short putt to save par. "From there, that crowd pulling for Phil so much and that whole bit of what you do call it, misstep kind of shook me up a little bit," Nahan said, "and affected me on the last couple of holes."

Nahan bogeyed the 16th and finished with a 70, leaving him four back at 10 under going into the final round of the \$5.2 million event.

Four were tied at 9 under — K.J. Choi, Harrison Frazar, Kenny Perry and Steve Flesch. Mark Calcavecchia and David Toms were 10 under. Toms got to 10 under but hit his tee shot into the water on the 14th for a double bogey.

The FBR event — formerly the Phoenix Open — draws the biggest crowd of any PGA tournament. An estimated 165,000 people came on a perfect, sun-baked Saturday — a single-day record for a tournament that draws about a half-million.

Golf roundup

"Awesome, isn't it?" Mickelson said. "Every year here is an amazing experience for all the players because of how many people we get here. You know, we average 40,000 or 50,000 on the tour, and here we have 165,000. This is amazing."

Practically every one of the revelers was cheering on Mickelson. "It's the desert son," Flesch said, "and that's the way it should be."

Parry wins Heineken playoff

MELBOURNE, Australia — Australia's Craig Parry ended Ernie Els' three-year hold on the Heineken Classic title Sunday, holing a 12-foot birdie putt on the fourth hole of a playoff with countryman Nick O'Hern.

Parry made his birdie putt on the fourth extra hole, O'Hern missed a 10-foot birdie attempt to end the tournament at historic Royal Melbourne.

Parry made par-saving putts on the first three playoff holes — the 18th twice and then the 17th, while O'Hern helped keep the playoff going by missing birdie putts inside 10 feet on the two opening holes.

Parry closed with a 1-under 70 to match O'Hern (71) at 14-under 270.

Els shot a 70 to finish at 12 under, two shots out of the play-off. He had three bogeys on the back nine, including the 18th.

Nicklaus claims skins victory

WAILAE, Hawaii — Jack Nicklaus returned from a long layoff following back surgery to take the Champions Skins Game on Saturday, winning 11 straight skins and a career-high \$340,000 in a run-away victory over Craig Stadler.

Stadler, the 2004 Champions Tour player of the year, was second with five skins and \$180,000 in his Skins Game debut. Defending champion Tom Watson earned \$80,000 for his two late skins.

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Mechanical problems again doom Stewart's Rolex 24 bid

By MIKE HARRIS
The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — A Pontiac-powered Riley prototype co-driven by sports car aces Max Angelelli, Wayne Taylor and Emmanuel Collard coasted to victory Sunday in the Rolex 24 sports car endurance race.

It wasn't supposed to be so easy in a race that saw a record 44 lead changes among eight cars and was up for grabs for 22 of the 24 hours.

NASCAR's Tony Stewart, who lost the lead and the race a year ago when his suspension failed with less than 25 minutes remaining, had another heartbreak this time when the Pontiac Crawford he shared with former race winners Andy Wallace and Jan Lammers had a gearbox failure with two hours and three minutes to go.

"It just popped out of second gear," said Wallace, a three-time Daytona 24 Hours winner. "There was no warning."

It was sweet for the winners, though. A year ago, they lost the lead because of a fuel pressure problem, giving the win to a Pontiac. Coon co-driven by Tony Barrichello, Christian Fittipaldi, Andy Pilgrim and Foster Barber.

Sunday's two front-running teams had been among the leaders from the noon start of the two-around-the-clock race on Saturday and had been separated by less than 40 seconds when Wal-

lace rolled into the pits with black smoke spewing from beneath his Daytona Prototype entry.

After Wallace's car went out, though, the closest competitor was the Lexus Doran of Didier Theys, Fabrizio Gollin and Matteo Bobbi, which was 11 laps behind.

Angelelli drove the last two hours, nursing that big lead.

"That was the toughest part of the race, that last two hours," the Italian driver said. "You go all out for 22 hours and then have to be very careful in traffic and not do anything stupid the last two hours."

The winners covered 710 laps, a total of 2,527.6 miles on the 3.56-mile road course that includes about three-quarters of the 2½-mile NASCAR oval and a winding infield section. They averaged more than 105 mph.

It was the second Daytona 24 Hours win for South African native Taylor and for Angelelli and Frenchman Collard.

After the duel for the lead was defused, the battle for second place grew intense, with four cars winding up less than three laps apart.

After the duel for the lead was defused, the battle for second place grew intense, with four cars winding up less than three laps apart. The Pontiac Crawford of Jimmie Johnson — another of the nine NASCAR regulars in the all-star lineup — and former Daytona winners Butch Leitzinger and Elliott Forbes-Robinson wound up second, 11 laps behind despite a long pit stop to fix an engine problem in the middle of the night.

Sharapova denies Davenport record title

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova claimed the Pan Pacific Open final Sunday by defeating top-ranked Lindsay Davenport in a tiebreaker.

Second-seeded Sharapova captured her first Pan Pacific title and prevented Davenport from winning a record fifth title here after a hard fought 6-1, 3-6, 7-6 (5) win at Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium.

"I'm very happy to have won," the Russian teenager said. "Lindsay played an amazing match and it all came down to the tiebreaker, so obviously it was a very tough match."

Top-seeded Davenport, who lost to Serena Williams in the final of the Australian Open a week ago, took a medical time out after the first set and came back to take the momentum despite a sore left thigh.

She produced 13 aces Sunday but couldn't keep up with the 17-year-old Sharapova when it mattered most.

"I left the court to get some support on my left thigh," said Davenport. "I just went back out there and tried to keep the points as short as possible. In the tiebreaker, she came up with some great shots and I couldn't run down

Tennis roundup

Sharapova, who lost in the semifinals of the Australian Open to Williams, also served well in Sunday's final and had nine aces.

"I served well in the first set," said Sharapova, who pocketed the US\$189,000 winner's check. "But she came out after the break and got a little confidence. It's tough when your opponent serves so well. I served well too but it was my return that was most of the time."

Davenport was gunning for her fifth Pan Pacific title, which would have made her the most successful player in the 22-year history of the event. Martina Hingis has also won here four times.

"Maria is a great player," said Davenport. "I'm sure you'll be seeing a lot more of her in the final in the years to come."

Sharapova has a history of winning in Japan. She is the two-time defending champion at the Japan Open.

"I guess this is my lucky place," said Sharapova. "I don't know why but I always

many balls."

Leading 6-5 in the tiebreaker, Sharapova won when Davenport couldn't catch up to her forehand return down the line.

seem to play well here."

With Sunday's victory, Sharapova will move up to No. 3 in the WTA rankings, behind Davenport and Williams but said she has no timetable for claiming the No. 1 spot.

"My job is to go out and perform well," said Sharapova. "I have no timetable to become No. 1 in the world. If it happens, it happens."

In the doubles final, the second-seeded pair of Janette Husárová of Slovakia and Elena Likhovtseva of Russia downed Davenport and fellow American Corina Morariu 6-4, 6-3.

Martinez breaks title drought

PATTAYA, Thailand — Former Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez claimed her first title in more than four years Sunday after grinding out a 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 win over Anna Vetrova of Germany to win the WTA Volvo Women's Open.

Drawing on her superior experience, third-seeded Martinez rallied from a second set loss to beat the 19-year-old, seventh-seeded German for her 33rd career title. Her last singles title was at Berlin in 2000.

"It was tough at the beginning of the week but I felt better towards the end," the 32-year-old Spaniard said.



Maria Sharapova reacts after beating Lindsay Davenport in the final of the Pan Pacific Open in a third-set tiebreaker on Sunday.

Ordonez signs with Tigers for up to \$105M

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Detroit Tigers snared the last remaining premier free agent of the offseason, agreeing to a \$75 million, five-year contract with outfielder Magglio Ordonez, a baseball source said Saturday.

Ordonez's deal could be worth up to \$105 million over seven seasons, the source told The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

Under the complicated deal, Detroit would have the right to void the contract after the 2005 season if Ordonez has a recurrence of the left knee injury

that hampered his production with the Chicago White Sox for most of last year and the recurrence lands him on the disabled list for 35 days or more.

Sports briefs

The 21-month signing bonus and a \$6 million salary in 2005, meaning the Tigers' exposure is \$12 million.

His contract calls for a \$15 million salary in 2006, \$12 million in 2007, \$15 million in 2008 and \$18 million in 2009. Detroit has a \$15 million option for 2010 with a \$3 million buyout, and a \$15 million option for 2011 with no buyout.

The Chicago Cubs, Toronto Blue Jays and Texas Rangers backed out of talks this week, and the New York Mets told Ordonez's agent, Scott Boras, on Friday that they were not prepared to move quickly and would first want to examine the player.

A four-time All-Star, Ordonez hit his 192 last season with nine homers and 37 RBIs in 202 at-bats for the Chicago White Sox. A career .307 hitter with 187 homers, he missed 36 games after injuring his left knee May 19 — an injury that required two operations, then went on the disabled list for good on July 22 with bone marrow edema.

Ordonez made \$14 million last year and the White Sox made no effort to re-sign him.

Judah takes Spinks' title with TKO

ST. LOUIS — Zab Judah claimed the undisputed welterweight title, beating Cory Spinks in his hometown with a ninth-round technical knockout Saturday night.

Judah lost a unanimous decision to Spinks in April in Las Vegas.

He knocked Spinks down in the 12th round of that fight and referred to the rematch as the 13th round, then winnily said "it's time."

Judah was the aggressor throughout this fight, neutralizing the crowd of more than 20,000 that



Zab Judah, right, knocks down Cory Spinks in the ninth round of the undisputed welterweight title bout on Saturday. Judah won by TKO in the ninth round.

chanted for Spinks, the son of former heavyweight champion Leon Spinks, who accompanied his son into the ring.

The fight was stopped at 2:49 of the ninth round, after Spinks was knocked down for the second time. Judah pressed the attack after the first knockdown and avoided Spinks' desperate efforts to tie him up. All three judges had Judah (33-2, 24 knockouts) comfortably ahead when the bout was stopped.

Judah set the tone from the first round, stalking Spinks while the champion mostly danced. He also staggered Spinks, dropping him to his knees at the bell in the seventh round, but it was not judged a knockdown.

Americans stage 1-4 finish in speedskating worlds

MOSCOW — Shani Davis led the United States to an unprecedented 1-4 finish in the men's 1500-meter race and a 1-2 sweep of the overall honors at the world allround speedskating championships on Sunday.

Davis collected 150.777 points to top the men's allround podium. Defending champion Chad Hedrick was second overall with 150.916.

Davis is the fourth American to win the overall title since Eric Heiden (1977-79), Eric Plante (1988) and Hedrick.

In the 1,500-meter race, Davis clocked 1 minute, 46.60 seconds to beat Hedrick by 1.10 seconds in the newly built Indoor Ice Skating Center.

KC Boutiette of the U.S. was third in 1:48.79, finishing 19 hundredths of a second ahead of yet another American, Derek Parra.

Kostelic wins downhill; Kildow is fourth again

BY ERICA BULMAN

The Associated Press

SANTA CATERINA VALFURVA, Italy — Croatia's Janica Kostelic won her second gold medal in three days, capturing the downhill at the world championships in another emphatic step in her recovery from illness and injury.

Kostelic, winner of Friday's combined, missed all of last season after thyroid surgery and several knee operations and hadn't raced a downhill in almost two years. On Sunday, she cut a daring line down the chilly, sun-drenched course to win in 1 minute, 39.90 seconds.

"This may be my favorite victory," she said. "It's hard to say because all victories are special. But it's something I never expected so soon, especially after last season. I don't know how it happened."

Elena Fanchini of Italy rewarded the home crowd by taking the silver medal in 1:40.16. Renate Goetsch of Austria was third in 1:40.29, beating Lindsey Kildow of the United States for a medal.

The American finished fourth for the second time at these worlds, and countrywoman Jonna Mendes was 12th.

Fanchini, a 19-year-old rookie, made her World Cup debut last month, placing 17th in a pair of downhill trials. This time, she set the pace early, then watched as 16 other racers were unable to match her time. It was only when Kostelic came down that Fanchini was ousted from the leader's spot.

Goetsch, who won the World Cup downhill title last year, leads this season's standings. She also won the downhill at the 1999 worlds in Vail, Colo.

Goetsch was trying to give her country a lift after a rain-soaked Saturday lost the downhill title for the first time in six years. She struggled at the beginning of this



American Lindsey Kildow reacts after finishing in fourth place in the Women's downhill at the World Alpine Ski Championships.

season but won three of four speed races in Cortina d'Ampezzo last month.

Kildow finished ninth in last weekend's super-G and fourth in the combined, where she missed a bronze medal by 0.20 seconds.

She was strong on the upper part of the course Sunday and looked set to take the bronze with her time of 1:40.52. The 20-year-old skier was devastated when Goetsch bettered her time and sobbed when she was relegated again to fourth.

"I don't work six hours in the gym just to be fourth," said Kildow, who finished second and fourth in the two World Cup races in Bormio last month. "I may be young, but my goal was to be world champion here. I have to go back to the drawing board to figure out what it's going to take."

"Maybe my time is next year," she added, referring to the Turin Olympics.

Michaela Dorfmeister, the 2001 downhill world champion and one of the favorites, crashed out.

Hall botches call on defenders

BY JASON WHITLOCK
The Kansas City Star

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Derrick Thomas will be enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame. It will just take longer than any of us anticipated.

It should come as no great surprise that the linebacker who spearheaded Kansas City's professional football resurgence in the 1990s failed to qualify for induction into the Hall on his first attempt. Five offensive linemen get to call in the first year of eligibility.

Since 1990, when linebacker Jack Lambert became the fourth member of Pittsburgh's Steel Curtain to gain admission in his first year of eligibility, 24 players/coaches have gained entry into the Hall the first time around. Only four of those 24 players were defenders — Ronnie Lott, Lawrence Taylor, Mike Singletary and Randy White.

Offensive players, with their easy-to-understand statistics, have a much easier time getting into the Hall of Fame than do their defensive counterparts. Since 1987, seven quarterbacks and seven running backs have been enshrined in their first year of eligibility. Heck, even offensive linemen get more love than defenders. Five offensive linemen have been first-time selections.

Defense may win championships, but when 39 voters look themselves in a room after noon, they go with the men who produce big numbers and, at least on Sunday, they righted past wrongs.

So quarterbacks Dan Marino and Steve Young, no-brainer selections, and old-schoolers Benny Friedman and Fritz Pollard will be immortalized this summer in

Commentary

Canton, Ohio. Marino and Young have the stats and MVP trophies to back up their selections. Friedman, a quarterback in the 1920s and '30s, was the league's first effective passer. Pollard, a coach and player in the '20s, was one of the league's first African-American contributors.

Derrick Thomas was simply a terrific defender, the most deadly pass-rushing force of the 1990s. One day that will get him into the Hall of Fame. It might take as many as 10 years, though. Next year's class has two automatic inductees — Troy Aikman and Reggie White. That leaves four possible slots available; there's a maximum of six inductees per year.

Cowboys receiver Michael Irvin will make it in all likelihood next year. "The Playmaker" was one of the six finalists Saturday. When you make the final six, the 39 voters are polled by year on whether you should make the Hall. A candidate needs 80 percent of the 39 votes. Irvin deserved 100 percent of the vote. Irvin, Aikman and Emmitt Smith led the Cowboys to three Super Bowls. After Emmitt, you could argue that Irvin was the most valuable member of the Jimmy Johnson-led Cowboys dynasty.

Oddly, despite the explosion in NFL passing game, since 1987 only one selector — Steve Largent — has been inducted into the Hall in his first year of eligibility.

Six members of the Steelers' dynasty — four Super Bowls — were first-ballot Hall of Famers. It appears that only Aikman and Smith will be first-ballots from the Cowboys. That makes no sense. The voters dissed Irvin because of his off-field problems, and I believe, because he's a horrible TV broadcaster. Generally speaking, being on TV helps you get into the Hall of Fame. Just ask Howie Long and Dan Dierdorf. But Irvin's mush-mouthed analysis is doing him more harm than good.

Having been spanked this year, the Hall voters will enshrine Irvin in 2006.

So now we're down to three spots. If Irvin goes, then look for voters to feel compelled to right the Art Monk wrong. When he retired in 1995 after 16 seasons, Monk held the record for all-time receptions. He's No. 5 now and No. 9 in all-time receiving yards. He was a member of Joe Gibbs' Super Bowl teams. Monk was the Marcus Allen of receivers — consistent, durable and classy. There's growing outrage among voters that Monk hasn't made it.

Giants linebacker Harry Carson is just plain outraged. Carson, a member of the Giants, may have botched his chance to make it this year by writing an angry letter saying he didn't want to be considered for induction anyway. He made the final six on Saturday. Carson played in nine Pro Bowls (the same number as Thomas) and was a member of Bill Parcells' first Super Bowl team. He belongs in the Hall of Fame. Carson has a strong case next year, despite his tantrum, particularly if Carson's old position coach and defensive coordinator Bill Belichick demands that Carson be enshrined. Belichick, New England's coach, is about to become the new Vince Lombardi.

That leaves Thomas in a fight for the No. 6 spot with Pittsburgh's L.C. Greenwood — another Steel Curtain defender — Chicago's Richard Dent and whoever might turn up as the all-school flavor of the year.

USA Today's Jarrett Bell, a Hall voter, told me that on Saturday no one held it against Thomas that the Chiefs never appeared in a Super Bowl during his career.

"It never came up," Bell said.

The problem is I had the Chiefs win a Super Bowl. So they would come up in conversation. Offensive players don't need Super Bowl titles to get in the Hall of Fame early. They have stats. It takes defense to win championships. And it takes championships for defensive players to win their proper respect.

secondary option

BY SEAN FARRELL
For The Associated Press

MONTREAL — It's been a strange winter for Jean Beliveau. As Canada's second-best player night is "Hockey Night," a ritual that bonds the generations who sit in front of televisions and watch the national pastime. But not this year.

"Usually I invite a couple of people to each game, and I would prefer to see them sitting in my seats and watching the game," says Beliveau, a Montreal Canadiens star and captain who helped the team win 10 Stanley Cups.

The Hall of Famer remained with the team as an executive and, now retired from that job, he still regularly attends home games.

This year, he and his wife have had to find other things to do on hockey nights.

"Maybe we've had more dinners with friends," Beliveau said. "We seem to be doing something else. I would prefer to go to the games, but on the other hand it gives me a chance to make sure none of my friends on Saturday that I've never had a chance, as a matter of fact, in my life."

The NHL and union completed a third straight day of talks Friday, with no progress toward ending the 4½-month lockout. There are no plans to meet again, and the season is on the verge of cancellation.

The labor strife has forced Toronto-based "Hockey Night in Canada" host Ron McLean to change his expectations from going to this winter. The Canadian Broadcasting Corp. is showing movies in place of its usual coast-to-coast hockey doubleheader. On Saturday, McLean was guiding the country through a triple-bill of "Babe," "Minority Report" and "Back to the Future Part III."

The Canadiens have won a record 24 Stanley Cups, including their first in 1916 — two years before the NHL was formed. Six different Montreal clubs have laid claim to the trophy a total of 41 times since it has been contested annually since 1893, with one exception.

The Cup was not awarded in 1919 when the final between the Canadiens and Seattle was called off tied at two games apiece because of the influenza outbreak that ultimately killed Montreal defenseman "Bad" Joe Hall.

Aside from that, hockey's biggest prize was awarded annually through both world wars.

Montreal Gazette hockey writer Red Fisher is in his 50th year on the Canadiens' beat. Fisher's debut was a memorable one — he was assigned to cover crowd reaction on March 17, 1955, for Montreal's first game at the Forum after Rocket Richard was suspended for the duration of the season and the playoffs. The unruly crowd caused the game to be forfeited to Detroit, and Fisher had to cover a riot in the streets.

After witnessing 17 of the Canadiens championships as a reporter, he continues to write his week-

ly hockey column for the newspaper, though he's not doing so with its current game coverage of the semipro Montreal Drakos.

The Journal de Montreal's Marc DeJoy has covered the Canadiens since 1983. In his long Montrealer's 22nd year on the beat has been like no other. Instead of following "les Habitués" to Toronto and Boston, he's been to Manchester, N.H., and Hamilton, Ontario, to cover minor league hockey and London, Ontario, to cover the senior league.

"Everyone's saying that hockey fans in Canada will come back, but maybe we should look at what happened in baseball," DeJoy said. "They call it the national pastime in the United States, and after 1994, how long did it take before the fans started to go back to the stadiums? It took a home contest between two players to get them interested, but I know that many in the States never went back."

Longtime season-ticket holder Claude Patenaude will be back in his customary seats in the first row behind the Canadiens' bench whenever the NHL resumes.

Patenaude, owner of the Ty-Cop Barbecue restaurant on avenue Mont-Royal, says his father's season tickets dated back to 1934-35.

"To go a whole season without any games distances you from hockey," Patenaude said. "I played with Richard's children while growing up in the Rocket's neighborhood in the north part of the city." They are a lot of other activities to do besides going to hockey games. I'm a guy who loves the opera, I love theater. But on the other hand, I've gone to games without missing a home game. Nowadays, I don't mind passing up a lot of the games."

The year Patenaude's father signed up for his tickets, he may have seen Leo Bourque play his final NHL season with the Canadiens. Bourque, a member of the Cup champion 1928 New York Rangers who passed away in 1978, ended an 11-year NHL career wearing No. 99 for Montreal.

Bourque's son, Leo, is another longtime Canadiens season-ticket holder. The younger Bourque plans to hold onto his tickets.

"See they're trying to sell the game to people in the 18- to 30-year-old range," says Bourque, who played in Europe and once attempted a four-ring complex. "They're lost interest now. To me, there's a big job ahead and it will take lots of promotion to get them back. And if it lasts another year, well, I don't know."

One of those promotional opportunities to draw new fans already has been lost this year. The Canadiens have made a tradition of playing a pair of home afternoon games on Super Bowl weekend.

"It was a great day for the kids," Bourque said. "The team made it a real day for the family, with clowns and games for the kids. You could hear the sound was very different in the Bell Centre. The Canadiens scored a goal during those games."

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Air Force's MWC title hopes hurt as Wyoming wins overtime decision

The Associated Press

LARAMIE, Wyo. — Jay Straight scored seven of his 18 points in overtime in leading Wyoming past Air Force 67-63 on Saturday night, damaging the Falcons' title hopes in the Mountain West Conference.

Wyoming (12-8, 4-3 MWC) has won four of its last five games, while the Falcons (14-8, 5-2) saw their two-game win streak end. Air Force fell two games behind No. 21 Utah, which beat San Diego State 61-41 Saturday night to improve to 7-0 in the league.

Wyoming forcing overtime when Steve Leven sank a three-point shot after Straight found him open with 10 seconds left in regulation, tying the score 51-51.

With Wyoming leading 56-55 at the 2:39 mark of overtime, the Cowboys' Dion Sherrell committed his fifth foul, but Dan Nwaeleke of Air Force was hit with a technical when he inexplicably slammed the ball to the floor.

Nwaeleke, who later said he thought he had been called for the foul, hit two free throws, but Straight then sank the two technical foul shots and Wyoming was back on top 58-57.

Wyoming outscored the Falcons 9-6 the rest of the way, with Straight scoring five points.

Sherrell contributed 11 points and Justin Williams and Leven added 10 each. Wyoming outrebounded Air Force 39-22, including 25-15 on offensive boards, and outshot the Falcons 50 percent to 41 percent.



Wyoming's Steve Leven, center, loses the ball while under pressure from Air Force defenders Antoine Hood (15) and Caleb Buchanan on Saturday night.

Air Force, which trailed 32-25 at the half, got 13 points apiece from Jacob Burtch and Nwaeleke. Antoine Hood had 12 and Nick Welch 10.

The Falcons hit only 11 of 31 three-point attempts, including 4-for-14 in the first half. Wyoming made five of 12 three-pointers for the game.

The game was the 200th for Wyoming coach Steve McClain, whose record is 123-77.

Cards shade UAB

BY JOHN ZENOR

The Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — It was Rick Pitino's kind of victory.

No. 9 Louisville brushed off UAB's pressure defense, overcame foul trouble and got big plays in the end from its top players to come away with a 77-73 victory over the Blazers on Saturday night.

"This is one of my favorite wins of the year," said Pitino, whose team had won its last eight games by an average of nearly 30 points. "UAB is a very tough-minded team, and this environment was difficult for us."

"I'm very proud that we could withstand all this."

Francisco Garcia and Juan Palacios hit two free throws each in the final 34 seconds for the Cardinals (20-3, 8-1 Conference USA) and Garcia also had a key block. Louisville stayed atop the league standings this week with victories over two of its top challengers, Cincinnati and UAB.

Denario Eddins gave UAB (16-6, 6-3) a 71-70 lead with a free throw with 1:44 left. Louisville's stars then took charge.

Larry O'Bannon, who finished with 21 points, hit a three-pointer from the top of the key. Then Garcia was fouled on a three-point attempt and hit two of three from the line with 34 seconds left for a 75-73 lead.

Garcia blocked a shot by Eddins on the other end and a long scramble for the ball ended with

a jump ball that gave Louisville possession. Palacios put the game away with two free throws with 8 seconds left.

"The game was there to be taken, but we couldn't finish it off," Blazers coach Mike Anderson said. "I think the whole nation got a chance to see what UAB basketball is all about."

Garcia, who had 19 points, played the final 3:25 with four fouls.

Palacios added 10 points and the Cardinals made 19 of 21 free throws.

The Blazers missed all eight of their three-point attempts in the second half on the series. Forward Marques Lewis picked up six fourth foul less than 6 minutes into the second half, and UAB wasn't as effective with him sidelined.

"When he was in there, they had to respect everybody in the game for us," said Eddins, who scored 18 points. "When he was out, they were able to concentrate on our shooters."

Denario Eddins had 16 points and his twin brother, Ronell, added 11 for UAB.

The Blazers led 45-43 at halftime but Louisville opened the second half with a 12-2 burst and led most of the way thereafter. The Cardinals could never push their lead past seven points in the half. Louisville made one of two free throws after getting fouled by Garcia with 3:25 left to tie it 70-70.

Kansas dominates Huskers down the stretch

The Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Keith Langford matched his career high with 27 points, and a 3 Kansas held Nebraska without a field goal for more than six minutes down the stretch in beating the Cornhuskers 78-65 to remain unbeaten in the Big 12.

Wayne Simien had 18 points and 14 rebounds for the Jayhawks (18-1, 8-0 Big 12), who have beaten their last four opponents by an average of 17.5 points since losing to Villanova on Jan. 22.

Jason Dourisseau scored a career-high 24 points for Nebraska (10-9, 3-5), which has lost five of its last six conference games.

No. 6 Kentucky 84, Vanderbilt 70: At Nashville, Tenn., Patrick Sparks, Kelenna Azubike and Chuck Hayes each scored 15 points to help Kentucky win its eighth straight.

The Wildcats (17-2, 8-0 Southeastern Conference) swept the season series between the teams and now have beaten Vanderbilt in 24 of the last 26 games.

Hayes had 13 rebounds and Rajon Rondo added 12 points for Kentucky, which has its best record since the 1998 NCAA championship team was 19-2.

Corey Smith led Vanderbilt with 16 points.

No. 7 Wake Forest 83, Virginia Tech 63: At Blacksburg, Va.,

Ronny Dourisseau scored 18 points lead Wake Forest.

Men's Top 25 Roundup

Downey, who plays behind star guards Chris Paul and Justin Gray, scored 13 points in the first half in just 12 minutes, getting into the game while Gray sat out in foul trouble.

Gray finished with 16 points for the Demon Deacons (19-3, 7-2 Atlantic Coast Conference). Paul didn't score until hitting a free throw with 3:30 to go, finishing with three points and a game-high nine assists.

Jamon Gordon led the Hokies (12-8, 5-4 ACC) with 20 points.

No. 10 Oklahoma St. 81, Baylor 63: At Waco, Texas, John Lucas III scored 11 of his 14 points in the first half to celebrate his final visit to the place where he started his college career.

Lucas was one of five double-figure scorers for the Cowboys (17-3, 7-2 Big 12). Ivan McFarlin had 18 points, Jameson Curry had 14 with four three-pointers, Stephen Graham had 13 points and Joey Graham 12.

Aaron Bruce, a freshman point guard from Australia, scored 33 points for Baylor (9-10, 1-7), who lost its first five straight.

Lucas began his career at Baylor, along with Lawrence Roberts (Mississippi State) and Kenny

Taylor (Texas). The trio left under relaxed transfer rules before last season after a scandal under former coach Dave Bliss that was exposed after the shooting death of a player.

Florida 85, No. 11 Alabama 54: At Gainesville, Fla., David Lee, Anthony Roberson and Matt Walsh each scored 18 points in Florida's largest victory ever over a ranked opponent.

Freshman Al Horford pulled down 18 rebounds for the Gators (14-5, 6-2 Southeastern Conference), who blew it open early with a 15-0 run.

Earnest Shelton and Chuck Davis had 15 points to pace Alabama (17-4, 6-2).

No. 12 Michigan State 75, Iowa 64: At Iowa City, Kevin Torbert scored 16 points to help Michigan State hold off a late Iowa rally.

The Spartans (15-4, 6-2 Big Ten) led by 22 points early in the second half and seemed to be coasting. But Iowa (15-6, 3-5) drew as close as three points with a little more than a minute left before fading.

The Hawkeyes, playing their first game since leading scorer Pierre Pierce was kicked off the team for off-court legal troubles, got 24 points from Adam Haluska.

No. 13 Washington St. UCLA 70: At Seattle, Brandon Roy scored 16 of his 20 points in the

second half, and Washington (19-3, 9-2 Pac-10) overcame 38 percent shooting to beat UCLA (12-7, 6-5).

No. 14 Arizona 90, Stanford 72: Salm Stoudamire had 20 of his 26 points in the second half, and Arizona (19-4, 9-2 Pac-10) ended Stanford's four-year winning streak in Tucson.

Arizona coach Lute Olson got his 29th conference victory, scored only to the 304 of UCLA's John Thomas 88.

Texas Tech 85, No. 14 Oklahoma 81: Jarriss Jackson scored 32 points, Devonne Giles added 17 and Texas Tech (14-5, 6-2 Big 12) upset Oklahoma (17-4, 6-2), snapping the Sooners' 14-game home winning streak.

No. 17 Gonzaga 92, Santa Clara 75: At Spokane, Wash., Ronny Turiaf and Adam Morrison each scored 22 points to lead Gonzaga (17-4, 7-2 West Coast Conference) over Santa Clara (12-12, 5-4).

Charlotte 91, No. 18 Cincinnati 90: At Charlotte, N.C., Brendan Playwick scored all but two of his 26 points on three-pointers to lead Charlotte (15-4, 6-2 Conference USA) over Cincinnati (17-5, 6-3) in the final regular-season meeting between the two Conference USA rivals.

Cincinnati heads to the Big East next season and Charlotte will move to the Atlantic 10.

Minnesota 60, No. 19 Wisconsin 50: At Minneapolis, Vince Grier scored 26 of his 32 points in the second half to lead Minnesota (16-6, 6-3 Big Ten) past Wisconsin (15-5, 6-3).

Iowa State 92, No. 20 Texas 80 (OT): Tashae Carr scored 13 points in overtime and Iowa State (11-8, 3-5 Big 12) won a 28-game conference road losing streak by surprising Texas (15-6, 4-4).

Iowa State (11-8, 3-5) hadn't won on the road in the Big 12 since beating Kansas State on Feb. 21, 2001.

No. 21 Utah 61, San Diego St. 41: At San Diego, Andrew Bogut had 15 points and 13 rebounds as Utah (19-3, 7-0 Mountain West Conference) won its 14th straight game and extended its conference lead to two games over second-place Air Force.

No. 23 Connecticut 68, St. John's 46: At Storrs, Conn., Rashad Anderson scored 21 points and Josh Boone blocked a career-high nine shots as Connecticut (14-5, 6-3 Big East) routed St. John's (8-11, 2-7).

Daryll Hill, the Big East's top scorer, led St. John's with 22 points.

No. 24 Villanova 89, Providence 81: At Villanova, Pa., Curtis Sumpter had 24 points and 13 rebounds, Allan Ray scored 20 and Randy Taylor 19 to lead Villanova (13-5, 5-4 Big East) over Providence (11-11, 0-8).



A crowd of 33,199, a record for an on-campus arena, attended Saturday night's Notre Dame-Syracuse game in the Carrier Dome at Syracuse, N.Y. The crowd broke the mark of 33,071 set for the Rutgers-Syracuse game in the Carrier Dome on March 9, 2003. The largest crowd ever to attend a college basketball game was 78,129 for the Kentucky-Michigan State game at Ford Field in Detroit, Mich., on Dec. 13, 2003.

Huge crowd, huge win for Syracuse

BY JOHN KEKIS
The Associated Press

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — When the size of the raucous orange-clad Carrier Dome crowd was announced during the second half, chills went down Gerry McNamara's spine. Then the Syracuse ace went out and helped ice Notre Dame.

McNamara scored 22 points, Hakim Warrick had 20 and the eighth-ranked Orange staged a furious late rally to beat the Irish 60-57 before 33,199, an NCAA record for a game in a campus arena.

"The excitement tonight was unlike anything I've been a part of," said McNamara, who scored 18 points in the second half. "The sad thing is we were down at the time and we had to pay attention to coach."

Syracuse (21-2, 8-1 Big East) was down virtually the whole

"We just didn't want to send all these people home mad, and for a second it looked as if it was going to be like that."

Hakim Warrick
Syracuse center

game until the final five minutes, and Notre Dame (13-6, 5-4) appeared on the verge of ending the Orange's 18-game home winning streak when Torin Francis converted a three-point play to put the Irish up 50-39 with 6:05 left.

With McNamara playing despite four fouls, Warrick took over inside, slamming home three dunks and hitting two free throws as the Orange used a pressing defense to spark an 11-0 run. McNamara, who missed all five of his three-point attempts in the first half, hit his third straight

three of the second to pull Syracuse to 50-48 and the crowd erupted with a deafening roar, chanting "Gerry! Gerry!"

Chris Quinn was then called for a 5-second violation, Notre Dame coach Mike Brey protested and received a technical, and McNamara made two free throws to tie it 50-50 with 3:24 left.

"We just got careless with the ball," said Francis, who finished with 15 points and 11 rebounds.

"The game was just going their way towards the end. The rest of the game we were in control. We

had a couple of turnovers, they were hitting free throws, and the next thing I knew it was tied."

McNamara was fouled by Chris Thomas while attempting a three with 1:48 left and hit all three free throws to put Syracuse up 55-52.

Francis's turnaround jumper in the lane made it 56-54 with 32.6 seconds left, but McNamara hit four more free throws to finish 11-for-11 from the line and keep Syracuse in front.

After Dennis Latimore's dunk with 19.5 seconds left, Terrence Roberts missed four straight foul shots for Syracuse, giving the Irish one last chance. Thomas nearly sent the game into overtime, but his desperation heave from beyond half court at the buzzer hit the rim and caromed away.

"We just didn't want to send all these people home mad, and for a second it looked as if it was going to be like that," Warrick said.

W.Virginia surprises Pittsburgh

BY JOHN RABY
The Associated Press

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Kevin Pittsnogle is so accustomed to starting that he had to take an early rest on Saturday. Refreshed, the West Virginia center left Pitt speechless.

Pittsnogle scored eight of his career-high 27 points in overtime to lead West Virginia to an 83-78 victory over No. 16 Pittsburgh on Saturday night. The 6-foot Pittsnogle, averaging 8 points a game, got his second start of the season because D'or Fischer was ill.

"When I got my second wind pretty fast, I was ready to go," said Pittsnogle, whose previous high was 26 points in 2003. "My performance wasn't enough to write me in the history book, but beating Pitt makes it a lot better."

West Virginia (13-7, 3-6 Big East) broke a five-game losing streak to its rival 70 miles to the north.

Pittsnogle converted a three-point play and a three-pointer a minute apart to give the Mountaineers a 73-66 lead with 2:08 left in overtime.

"Pittsnogle is a hard matchup for us and when he's shooting the ball from (outside), it becomes very difficult to guard for our bigger guys," Pitt coach Mike Dixon said. "Sometimes guys step up in the absence of other guys, and that's exactly what he did."

Fischer is West Virginia's No. 3 scorer and No. 2 rebounder, but he was hardly missed as Pittsnogle filled in well, making 10 of 17 shots.

The Mountaineers committed just four turnovers and erased a double-digit deficit in the second half to beat a ranked team for the first time in five tries during a grueling three-week stretch.

Hundreds of fans from the student section stormed the court and mobbed 12 Mountaineer players after the final buzzer. The WVU band played "Happy Birthday" and the leftover crowd sang to third-year coach John Beilein, who celebrated his 52nd birthday Saturday.

Chevon Troutman scored 25 points for Pittsburgh (15-4, 5-3).

ACC-bound Boston College sets Big East win mark

BY JIM O'CONNELL
The Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Boston College set a record it never will be able to break.

The fifth-ranked Eagles beat Seton Hall 69-52 on Saturday night to become the first team in Big East history to go 20-0. And the Eagles did it in their last season in the league.

"That's pretty cool to go out with a bang," junior forward Craig Smith said. "To be the first team ever in this last year, that's something special."

Jared Dudley had 20 points and 14 rebounds for Boston College (20-0, 9-0), which set a school record for a winning streak and remained with No. 1 Illinois as the only major-college unbeaten.

Just as in a few of the Eagles' victories this season, the victory over Seton Hall (10-9, 2-6) wasn't high on style points. But Boston College won despite playing at the pace Seton Hall wanted and by scoring a season-low point total on a night it shot well below its average.

"I'd give it a 6. It was kind of ugly," Dudley said when asked to

grade the win on a scale of 1 to 10. "But we passed the test and move on."

Smith had 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Eagles, who came into the game averaging 74.2 points on 46.6 percent shooting. Sean Marshall added 12 points, all in the first half.

John Allen had 12 points for the Pirates, who came in last in the Big East in scoring (64.5 points a game) and shooting (40.6 percent).

Dudley's three-pointer with 2:32 left gave Boston College a 52-47 lead. Andrew Sweet's

three-point play got Seton Hall within two with 2:05 left, but the Pirates scored on only one of their final five possessions and the Eagles closed with an 8-2 run.

"This was the same type scenario as some of the early wins, but Seton Hall was better than those teams," Eagles coach Al Skinner said, referring to overtime non-conference defeats of Holy Cross and Yale and a big comeback victory over Kent State. "Sometimes we just win. We were fortunate to come up with some big plays."

Seton Hall coach Louis Orr blamed his team's loss on how it performed in the final minutes.

"We held Boston College to 37 percent shooting but there is a sense of toughness that we still need to obtain in order to finish out these games," he said. "We have been able in the past to win these games with poor shooting because we understood how to play with toughness."

Two Big East teams had gone 19-0 before, but Connecticut in 1998-99 and Syracuse in 1999-2000 both lost in their 20th game.

The Eagles, who will join the Atlantic Coast Conference next season, won 19 straight games in the 1968-69 season.

SPORTS



James gets Cavs' homestand off to good start, Page 26

Coach K falls, team rises

Krzyzewski fine after collapsing; sees Duke win

By KEITH PARSONS
The Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Sprawled on the court that bears his nickname, Mike Krzyzewski thought first about his wife and his three daughters.

But not so much about their worry or concern about his fall.

Rather, he prepared himself for the endless teasing he knew he would receive.

"I've got to deal with that forever now," Coach K said with a smile.

The Duke coach bounced up quickly after a dizzy spell sent him to the floor in the first half, and the fourth-ranked Blue Devils went on to beat No. 25 Georgia Tech 82-65 Saturday.

J.J. Redick had 17 of his 26 points in the first half and Shelden Williams finished with 15 points, 12 rebounds and six blocks for Duke (17-2, 7-2 Atlantic Coast Conference), which had lost two of its previous three games. That included a rare one at Cameron, where the Yellow Jackets (13-7, 4-5) ended the Blue Devils' 41-game home winning streak last season.

Daniel Ewing added 16 points, but clearly the focus in this one was on Krzyzewski, the 57-year-old coach celebrating his 25th season in Durham.

During a timeout 8½ minutes into the game, he was talking to one of the referees and suddenly fell to the floor at Coach K Court.

Krzyzewski lay on his right side, facing his bench, but never lost consciousness.

"I don't know if it's ever happened to you, but when you get up real quick, sometimes you get lightheaded," he said. "Over my 30 years of coaching, it's happened a number of times. Normally, you just get up like that and you have your feet under you, and it's OK."

He jokingly blamed his lack of balance on the running shoes he was wearing instead of his normal loafers, part of a promotion for the National Association of Basketball Coaches and the American Cancer Society.

Coaches around the country participated — including Georgia Tech coach Paul Hewitt and assistants on both teams — and many will auction the more casual shoes at alumni gatherings, donating the money to the fight against cancer.

Krzyzewski's might fetch top dollar now. "I felt like a chump, like someone hit me with an air punch and I'm out," Krzyzewski said. "I'm thinking, 'What an idiot,' and I know I'm going to get it from my daughters and my wife. They have so much ammunition on me."

Krzyzewski's wife, Mickie, ran from her seat in the upper deck to the end of the bench, and Duke athletic director Joe Alleva came, too. But Krzyzewski was up and back in front of his players to complete the timeout.

"That was really scary," Blue Devils forward Shavlik Randolph said. "When he was



Danville Register & Bee/AP

Duke basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski, left, puts a towel on his head on returning to the bench moments after he collapsed during a timeout in the first half of Duke's 82-65 victory over Georgia Tech on Saturday. Krzyzewski spent several seconds on the floor before returning to the huddle. He kept coaching for the remainder of the game, showing no ill effects from the fall.

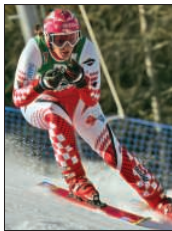


This image from CBS Sports television shows Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski lying on the court after collapsing during the first half.

on the floor, it's like seeing one of your family members there. But he came right back to the huddle and said, 'I'm all right.'"

When referee Reginald Cofer later went to check on him, Krzyzewski took the opportunity to complain about the officiating, and Cofer walked away smiling.

The fall had little effect on the game. At the time, the Blue Devils led 15-12, and a dunk by Georgia Tech's Isma'il Muhammad later cut the lead to one. Redick started a run of nine unanswered points with a three-pointer, and although the Yellow Jackets briefly rallied to within one, Duke kept control throughout.



Kostelic takes downhill gold; Disappointed Kildow fourth

Page 28



Mickelson giving hometown fans reason to party at FBR Open

Page 27



Sharapova tops Davenport, will rise to No. 3 in world ranking

Page 28

"I just wanted to come out in the first half with a lot of energy and set the tone, and I think I did that," Redick said. "I was just trying to make plays all over the court."

A 17-4 spurt spanning halftime made it 51-37, and the margin never got under eight down the stretch.

"I thought they beat us to a lot of loose balls that made a big difference in the game," Hewitt said. "We're just not tough enough right now. I'm to blame as much as anybody, but to win on the road, you've got to show some toughness."

Georgia Tech has lost five of its last seven games, all without injured guard B.J. Elder (hamstring). He got hurt in an overtime loss at Kansas and missed his ninth straight game.

Jarrett Jack scored 18 points and Luke Schenscher had 11 for the Yellow Jackets.

"I don't know what we have to do as a whole to get everybody playing the same way," Jack said. "It's crunch time now, being that we're going into the latter stages of conference play, and if we want to make it to the [NCAA] tournament, we have to step it up."

■ Syracuse rallies to beat Notre Dame, extend home winning streak before record on-campus crowd, Page 31

Last premier free agent Ordonez agrees to deal with Tigers Page 28